Five Treaties,
viz.
THE GOLDEN TREATISE,
OF THE
Antient and Learned Father
Vincentius Lirinensis.

THE VERITIE
OF
CHRISTIAN FAITH.

THE FELICITIE
OF A
CHRISTIAN LIFE.
Written by *Hierome Savonarola.*

THE
PROFIT OF BELIEVING
By Saint *Augustine.*

S. *AUGUSTIN'S* BOOK
DE
Cura pro Mortuis.

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PRINTED,
Anno Dom. MDCLI.

THE GOLDEN TREATISE OF THE Antient and Learned Father *Vincentius Lirinensis.*

Written about twelve hundred years since.

FOR

The Antiquity, and Universality of the Catholick Religion: against the profane Novelties of all Heresies.

Translated into English by A. P.

Very profitable for all such as desire in these dangerous times, to embrace the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to remain free from all infection of false doctrine, as in the Preface more at large is declared.

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Printed, *Anno Dom.* 1651.

TO THE CHRISTIAN Reader zealous of Truth, and desirous of Salvation: A. P. wisheth the knowledge of the one in this life, and the fruition of the other in the life to come.

I PRESENT thee here (gentle Reader) the ancient Father *Vincentius Lirinensis*, Native indeed of *France* but clothed in an *English* habit: a Book though little, yet learned; & no lesse profitable then pleasant: of smal volume, if thou respect the quantity, but of rare price if thou consider the quality. The Discourse is not of gathering and scraping together the pelf of this world, which choaketh the heavenly seed of Gods word, and

puteth man in a dangerous state, if we credit him *who being rich, for our sake became poor*: Mat 13.22. and 19.24. it disputeth not of attire, nor of the art of pampering this corruptible carcase, which brought that gay belli-god, of whom we read in the Gospell, *Luc.* 16. to the furious flames and endlesse torments of Hell fire: it prosecuteth not wicked and wanton discourses, *which corrupt good manners*, being in very deed the bellowes to kindle the coales of carnality, the nourses of unchaste thoughts, and the very bait with which the Devil doth daily angle and catch the unfortunate soules of men: But it handleth that which redoundeth to the benefit of our soul, *created to the image of God*, and sheweth us the way how we may so governe this frail vessell of ours, in the tempestuous sea of this wicked world, that at last we may

safely arrive at the port and harbour of Celestiall happinesse. For if the first step to heaven be to believe aright, and the foundation and ground of all salvation be faith, as I think no man can doubt, that believeth that there is any God or truth at all, then cannot this golden Treatise but be acceptable to all such as love Jesus Christ, and tender the salvation of their souls, being as it were the heavenly pillar of fire that may guide us through the desert of this world, unto the land of promise, *Exod.* 13. and that glittering star to lead us unto the new born King of the Jews and Saviour of mankind. *Matt.* 2. But to the end that thou mayst more plainly and particularly view the excellency and great necessity of this rare book, and as it were with *Moses*, from the top of Mount *Nebo*, contemplate the land of *Canaan*, flowing with

Milk

Milk and Honey, *Deut.* 34. I will briefly set down such motives as invited me to the labour of translating it; for the self same, as I verily think, cannot but inflame thee to the diligent reading of it also. Three principall reasons then especially moved me. The first was, because it is very ancient, being written above eleven hundred years past, for it was composed three years after the generall Councell of *Ephesus*, as appeareth in the conclusion of the book. And as the Authour himself is of great antiquity, so is his doctrine more antient, being the self same which flourished in his time, and came from the Apostles of Christ: which thing as it was never of any good man doubted of, so it is also most apparent: First, by sound reason, grounded in Gods word; because when any man writeth ought concerning faith and religion, and

the same is not controuled of any of that time, it is an euident argument, that it was conformable to the doctrine then generally taught and receiued, otherwise these Bishops and Doctours which God (as S. Paul saith) *hath giuen, that we be not little ones, wauering and carried about with euery blast of doctrine*, Ephes. 4. could neuer haue held their peace, but would, as the Prophet admoniseth, *Haue cried out, exalted their voice like a trumpet*, Esa. 58. as we find in like case, the heresies of *Nicholaus* noted by S. John for their false doctrine, Apoc. 2. *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* reproued by S. Paul, for an error about the resurrection, 2. Tim. 2. Secondly, because the authour himself doth not only vnfolde the same, in setting down the answer of many excellent, holy, and learned men, which liued in his daies; nor only because he a-

knowledgeth that what he hath here written, he received it from his anceſtours, and forefathers, both which he doth in the very firſt entrance; and generally throughout the whole booke: but eſpecially for that towards the later end he ſo highly commendeth the generall Councell of *Epheſus*, that is, the Parliament of the world: which ſurely he never would have done, had he not joyned with them in opinion, concerning faith and religion; and what their opinion was himſelf reciteth, for he ſaith that thoſe Fathers, inſpired by God, decreed that nothing was to be beleeved, but that which the ſacred antiquity of our forefathers agreeing together in Chriſt, had holden and believed. Which ſurely is a notable argument, that what faith was by Chriſt planted, and his Diſciples preached, was by them carefully kept and maintained

ed: which thing is especially of us English-men to be noted, because the first four Generall Councells, amongst which this of *Ephesus* is one, and the third in order, are worthily allowed by act of Parliament. *Anno* 1. *Eliz.* Wherefore moved with such reasons, we may without all scruple or doubt, not onely read this book, but also embrace and entertain it, as the common doctrine of that time, as the religion practised and reverenced in the primitive Church, as the faith and belief of the *Ephesine* Councell & so consequently, as the true doctrine of Jesus Christ. Now then seeing we live in those daies in which so many new sects and doctrines, such strange and monstrous opinions, such superstitious and new-fangled devises flie up & down the world, & seeing we are fallen into the later times in which *Men shall heap up to themselves*

maisters according to their own desires, and shall not indure sound doctrine, but avert their ears from truth, and be converted to fables: 1 Tim. 4. In which *they shall love pleasures more then God, have a shew of godlinesse but yet denying the vertue thereof:* 2 Tim. 3. In which *many scoffers shal come walking according to their own desires, whom vide themselves, sensuall, not having the spirit.* In which *many false Christs, & many false Prophets shal arise & seduce many:* Vety necessary it is being thus fore-warned of God, that before all things we take great heed not to be perverted, and seduced by erroneous teachers, or false Prophets, but on the contrary do diligently preserve our faith, the light of our souls, the root & foundation of al goodnes, & without *which it is impossible to please God* as S. Paul saith. Wherin we can take no better course, no way more sure, then to repair to the time of the pri-

mitive Church, when the bloud of Christ was yet fresh bleeding in mens hearts, when the Gospel was instantly preached, firmly beleeved, sincerely practised, confirmed by miracles, established by the death of so many Martyrs; especially being exhorted hereunto by the holy scriptures: for as by them we are admonished of the dangers and troubles of the later dayes, so are we for a preservative against them, sent to ancient times to conduct us to Gods true religion. *Stand*, saith the Prophet Jeremy *Chap. 6. upon the way and inquire of the ancient paths, which is a good way & walk in them, and you shall find rest for your selves.* Solomon likewise in his Proverbs admonisheth us in this sort: *Do not passe the ancient bounds which thy Fathers have set downe.* Chap. 22. And in Ecclesiasticus. Ch. 8. *Do not set light by the reports of thy elders for they have learned of*

their

their forefathers, because of them shalt thou learn understanding, and in the time of necessity shalt thou give answer. To the end therefore (gentle Reader) that thou be not carried away with the sweet benedictions of those licentious masters, with which the later times, according to the predictions of the Apostles, should be much pestered, nor seduced with the erroneous doctrine of those false Prophets, and false Christs, of which the Son of God, the true Prophet and true Christ, hath forewarned us; and that thou mayest find out a good way to walk in, and keep thee within the ancient bounds set down by our forefathers, and by their report learn wisdome and understanding; I am to request thee to vouchsafe the reading of this old Father newly translated, and I nothing doubt but thou wilt give that censure which the Queen of *Sheba* gave of the wisdome of *Solomon*, 3. *Reg* 10.

The

The second reason which set me forward was, for that I find this book not written against some one or a few particular false teachers (as St. *Augustine* and divers ancient learned Doctours did against the *Arians*, *Pelagians*, and such like) but against all heresie, or erroneous doctrine whatsoever; which is a thing of so great importance, as I know not what can be devised more. What gold were too much, or what treasures too dear for that medicine which had virtue to cure all diseases? False doctrine and heresie is a great sore, a canker more pestilent then any corporall infirmity whatsoever, seeing this worketh onely the temporall destruction of our body, but that causeth death both of body and soul everlasting. In other books we find the confutation of some speciall point of false doctrine; in many the overthrow of

of divers; but to destroy all at one blow, and those each so contrary to themselves, so distinct for time, so divers for place, so many for number, is a property peculiar onely to this most excellent treatise: and therefore it may fitly be compared to that miraculous pond, whereof we read in the Gospell, *John.* 5. which cured all diseases: for as that water, moved by the Angell, cured whatsoever infirmity of him that first entred in: so this book written, no doubt, by the motion of the holy Ghost, hath force to cure any such as is corrupted with erroneous doctrine, or to preserve him from all infection, if he vouchsafe to enter in, that is, to read it, to consider, and weigh diligently what is said, and discoursed of. The reason why this book hath this rare quality, in my opinion is, because it sheweth the right way of expounding Gods divine

Scripture

Scripture, in which so many to the great danger of mens souls, do so greatly go a stray: and therefore as *David* overthrowing *Golias* the chief Champion of the camp, put all the *Philistins* to flight, 1 *Reg.* 17. so no marvell, though this ancient Authour discovering the false expositions and glosses of sacred Scripture, the principall pillar of all poysoned doctrine, overthroweth also all wicked heresie.

The third and last motive which incouraged me to this labour, and ought partly to move thee to the reading, is the brevity of the work, the fineness of the method, the eloquence of the stile: and therefore if long and large volumes do little please, this is short which cannot cause dislike; if confusion be ingratefull, a methodicall order can not but like thee; if a stile harsh and course sitteth not thy taste, then I trust that

which

which is fine, pleasant and delicate, will content thy humour. Onely I am to crave pardon, that my rough and rude English, nothing answereth his smooth and curious Latin. And therefore I could wish thee, if skill serveth, rather to consult with the authour himself, then to use the help of his rude interpreter; otherwise for such as be not of so deep reading, for whom especially I have taken this pain, I am to desire that they nothing dislike the sovereign medicine for the wooden box, nor the exquisite and rare gemme for the course casket.

These be the reasons (Gentle Reader) which especially moved me to the translating of this antient and learned Father: I beseech thee as thou tenderest the salvation of thy soul, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to reade him attentively, in whom thou shalt see clearly as in a glasse

the

the faith of our fore-fathers, the religion of the primitive Church, and in whom thou ſhalt find by Gods word and authority of ſacred Scripture, the madneſſe of all Hereticks cruſhed in pieces, and that in a ſhort, methodicall, and eloquent Treatiſe. The Holy Ghoſt which moved, no doubt, this antient learned Father to the writing of this Work, incline and move thy heart to the diligent reading, and ſincere following of the ſame.

To the Reader.

the Parts of our Forefathers, there-
upon of the Reformed Church, and
in whom they trust by Gods
word and authority of sacred Scri-
pture, the Fundamentals of all Heresies
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* * *

An Advertisement in the reading of the XIII. Chapter of the Vanity of Christian Faith.

THe Reader is desired to take notice, that wheresoever in this treatise the term Adoration is applied unto the Mother of God, or to any other person or thing beside God himself, it imports only Dulia, that is such an inferiour degree of reverence and veneration as creatures may be capable of, according to the severall degrees of excellency which is in them, and according as the Word is frequently understood in Holy Scripture, viz. Gen 23: 7. 12. † 18: 2. † 19: 1. † 50: 18. Acts. 10: 25. Dan. 2: 46.

46. Matth. 2 : 2. 8. 1 Chron. 29 : 20. Exod. 3 : 15. † 33. 10. Jos. 5 : 14. 15. Apoc. 19 : 10. † 22 : 9. *and not to signifie that supream Honour and estimation, which is incommunicable, and proper onely to God Almighty, and commonly called from* S. Austin Latria.

Errata's in the Profit of Believing.

In the Preface, Page 3. line 23. read thus, S. Augustine, who (as D. Field lib. 3. de Eccles. fol. 190. asserteth) was &c. p. 6. l. 9. for dere r. desire. p. 12 l. 20. r. pure offering.

In the Book, p. 13. l. 15. for when r. whom. p. 50. l. 11. for one r. or. p. 82. l. 24. r. adorning. p. 85. l. 10. for reserue r. reserre. p. 89. l. 26. r. probable. p. 98. l. 7. r. retractations. p. 124. l. 14. r. virtue and power. p. 125. l. 6. for divens r. divers. p. 127. l. 11. r. bosome. p. 128. l. 20. for the r. them. p. 130. l. 9. r. 100. p. 133. *l.* 9. leave out a.

This Golden Treatise is fitly divided into five Parts.

From the beginning to the fifth Chapter the Authour delivers a generall and a regular way to discern the true Faith from heresie, by Universality and Antiquity, and satisfies the objections to the contrary.

From the fifth to the eleventh he treats of the causes why God suffers heresies, where he brings in the fall of Origen *and* Tertullian, *and of some hereticks,* Photinus, Apollinaris, *and* Nestorius, *and sets down their heresies and the Catholick doctrine opposite unto them.*

From the eleventh to the fifteenth he shews the duty of a true Catholick in keeping the depositum *of faith, and carefully*

fully avoiding all Novelties.

From the fifteenth to the Recapitulation, a caveat of the subtilty of hereticks in alledging the Scriptures.

The Recapitulation contains the substance of the former discourse.

Vincentius Lirinensis

FOR

The Antiquity and Universality of the Catholick Faith against the prophane Novelties of all Heresies.

THE holy Scripture of God saying and warning us in this sort: *Ask thy Fathers and they shall tell thee, thy elders and they shall report unto thee.* And again, *Accommodate thy ears to the words of wise men.* Likewise, *My sonne forget not these speeches but let thy heart keep my words,* Deut. 52. Prov. 22. & 3.

It seemeth unto me a stranger of this world and the least of Gods servants, that it shall by his gracious help be a matter of no small profit to set down in writing what I have of holy Fathers faithfully received, being a thing very necessary for mine own infirmitie, having alwaies therby in readinesse, how by daily reading thereof I may help my weak memory. Vnto which labour not onely the profit to be reaped by the worke, but also the very consideration of the time, and opportunitie of the place moued and inuited me: the time, because reason it is, that seeing it consumeth and bereaueth us of all humane and earthly things, we should also take out of it something which may availe us to life euerlasting: especially seeing the terrible iudgment of God, which we expect drawing neere upon us, doth seriously inuite and prouoke us to increase our

our studies and exercises in religion, and the fraudulent dealing of new Heretickes requireth much care and attention. The place, because having forsaken the company and troubles of the world, and chosen a solitary Abbey in a fenle coven for mine abiding, where I may without any great distraction of mind put in practise that which is sung in the Psalm 45. *Be vacate and see that I am God.* With which reasons also accordeth the purposed end and resolution of my whole state of life, in that I have by the help of Christ, after long and divers stormes indured in the waves knowded my self in the harbour of a religious life, a secure port for all states of men, where contemning the baits of vanity and pride, I may sacrifice God with the sacrifice of humility, and so escape not onely the shipwrack of this present life, but also the fire of the next.

But now in the name of God
will I set upon that which I have
taken in hand: that is, to [illegible]
[illegible] and [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
presumption of an arrogant meaning
yet to keep this rule in my writing
meerely to lay forth all
briefly to handle each needful
point, neither that in fine and curious
words; but in eafie and common
speech, in such sort that most that
may seem rather touched then de-
clared. Let them write delicately
and penne curiously, which either
either upon envie, or moved with
reproofe of slouth, enterprise any
action, but for me it is sufficient
for helping my memory or
forgetfulnesse I have gathered
ther this Commonitory, which
withstanding by Gods

daily endevour by little and little (calling to mind such things as at times past I have learned) to correct and make more perfect. And this have I thought good to forewarn, that if happily this work of mine shall fortune fall into the hands of Censurers, they do not overhastily reprehend in it that which they understand present promise to undertake with future correction better to polish and mend.

Cap. I.

INquiring therefore often with great desire, and attention of very many excellent, holy, and learned men, how and by what means I might assuredly and as it were by some generall and ordinary way discern the true Catholick faith, from false and wicked Heresie. To this question I had usually this answer of

them all, that whether I or any other desired to find out the fraud of Heretieks, daily springing up, and to escape their snares, and willingly would continue safe and sound in religion, that he ought two manner of wayes by Gods assistance to defend and preserve his faith, that is first by the authority of the law of God: secondly by the tradition of the Catholick Church.

Here some man perhaps may ask, that seing the Canon of the scripture is perfect and most aboundantly of it self sufficient for all things, what need we joyne unto it the authority of the Church her understanding and interpretation? The reason is this, because the scripture being of it self so deep and profound, all men do not understand it in one and the same sense, but diverse men diversly this man and that man, this way and that way expound and interpret the

sayings

sayings thereof, so that to ones thinking, so many men, so many opinions almost may be gathered out of them, for *Novatus* expoundeth it one way, *Photinus* another, *Sabellius* after this sort, *Donatus* after that: *Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius* will have this exposition: *Apollinarius* and *Priscillian* will have that: *Iovinian, Pelagius, Celestius* gather this sence: and to conclude *Nestorius* findeth out that: and therefore necessary it is for the avoiding of so great windings and turnings of divers errours that the line of expounding the Prophets and Apostles, be directed and drawn, according to the rule of the ecclesiasticall and Catholick sense.

Again in the Catholick Church, we are greatly to consider, that we hold that, which hath been beleeved *every where, alwayes, and of all men:* for that is truly and properly Catho-

licke (as the very force and nature of the word doth declare, which comprehendeth all things that be truely universall) and that shall we do if we follow vniuersalitie, antiquitie, consent. Uniuersalitie shall we follow thus, if we professe that one faith to be true which the Church throughout the world acknowledgeth and confesseth. Antiquity shall we follow, if we disagree not any whit in opinion from them, whom all know that our holy Elders and Fathers reverenced, and had in great estimation. Consent shall we likewise follow, if amongst our forefathers we hold the definitions and opinions of all or almost of all the Priests and Doctours together.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

WHat then shall a Christian Catholick do, if some small part of the Church cut it self off from the communion of the Universall Faith? What else but prefer the health of the whole body before the pestiferous and corrupt member? What if some new infection goeth about to corrupt not onely a little part, but the whole Church? Then likewise shall he regard, and be sure to cleave unto antiquity, which cannot possibly be seduced by any crafty novelties. What if in Antiquity it self, and amongst the Antient Fathers, be found some errour of two or three men; or haply of some one City or Province? Then shall he diligently take heed that he preferre the decrees and determinations of the Universall Antient Church,

before the temerity or folly of a few. What if some such case happen where no such thing can be found? Then shall he labour, by conferring and laying together amongst themselves the antient Fathers opinion, not of all, but of those onely which living at diverse times, and sundry places, yet remaining in the communion and faith of one Catholick Church, were approved masters and guides to be followed: and whatsoever he perceiveth, not one or two, but all joyntly with one consent, plainly, usually, constantly, to have holden, written, and taught, let him know that without all scruple or doubt he ought to beleeve, hold, and profess that faith, that doctrine, that religion. But for more perspicuity and light of that which hath been said; each part is to be made clear with severall examples, and somewhat more at large to be amplified, least too much

brevity

brevity breed obscurity, and over-much hast in speech take away the substance and weight of the matter.

When in the time of *Donatus*, of whom came the *Donatists*, a great part of *Africk*, fell headlong into his furious errour, and unmindfull of her name, religion, and profession, preferred the sacrilegious temerity of one man, before the Church of Christ; then all those of *Africk* which detested that prophane Schisme and united themselves to the universall Churches of the world, they onely amongst them all remaining within the bosome of the Catholick Church could be saved, leaving certainly a notable example to their posteritie how ever after by good custome the sound doctrine of all men, ought to be preferred before the madnesse of one or a few. Likewise when the heresie of the *Arians* had neer corrupted not a little part, but

well

well nigh the whole world, in such sort that (almost all the Bishops of the latine Church deceived, partly by force, partly by fraud) mens minds were covered as it were with a mist, what especially in so great a confusion was to be followed: then whosoever was a lover and a follower of Christ, and preferred ancient faith before new errour, was not touched with any spot of that infection. The danger of wch time doth abundantly shew, what calamity entreth in, when a new doctrine is admitted. For at that time not onely small matters, but things of great importance were overthrown: for not onely alliance, kindred, friends, families, but also cities, commonwealths, countries, Provinces, yea & at length the whol Romane Empire, was shaken and overturned. For when the profane novelty of the *Arians*, like some Bellona or fury, had first taken captive the Emperour,

Emperour, afterward subduing all pallaces to her new laws never ceased after that to trouble and confound all things private and publicke, holy and not holy, putting no difference betwixt good and truth but as it were from an high place did strike all at her pleasure, Then married women were defiled, widows spoiled, virgins violated, Abbeys suppressed, Clergie-men vexed, Deacons beaten, Priests banished, Dungeons, Prisons, Mines, filled with holy men, of which the greater part banished the Citie, like exiles, pined and consumed away amongst deserts, dens, and wilde beasts, with nakednesse, thirst and hunger. And all this misery had it any other beginning? but because humane superstition was admitted for heavenly doctrine, well grounded antiquity subverted by wicked novelty, whilest our Superiours decrees were violated,

lated, our Fathers ordinances broken, the Canons of our auncestours abrogated, and whilest the licentious libertie of prophane and new curiositie, kept not it self within the chaste limites of sacred and sound antiquitie. But perhaps we devise all this of hatred to Novelitie, and affection to Antiquitie? Who so thinketh, at least let him give credit to blessed *Ambrose* who in his second book to *Gratian* the Emperour bewailing the sharp persecution of that time, saith thus: *But now O God* (quoth he) *we have sufficiently washed and purged with our ruine and blood, the death of the Confessours, the banishment of Priestes, and the wickednes of so great impiety, it hath manifestly appeared that they cannot be safe which have violated and forsaken their faith.* Likewise in his third book of the same work. *Let us therfore* (quoth he)

keep

keep the precepts of our elders, & not with temerity of rude presumption, violate those seales descending to us by inheritance. None durst open that prophetical book close sealed, not the elders, not the powers, not the Angells, not the Archangells: to explicate and interpret that book was a prerogative only reserved to Christ. The Preistlike book sealed by the Confessours and consecrated with the death of many Martirs, which of us dare presume to open? which book such as were compelled to unseale notwithstanding afterward when the fraud was condemned, they sealed again, they which durst not violate or touch it became Martirs: how can we deny their faith, whose victorie we so praise & commend? We commend them I say, O venerable *Ambrose*, we surely commend them, and with praises admire them. For who is so senseless,

that

that although he cannot arrive to their perfection, desireth not yet to imitate, whom no force could them remove from defending their auncestours faith: not threatnings, not flatterings, not life, not death, not the King, not the Emperor, not men, not Devills; those I say whom for maintenance of religious antiquitie our Lord vouchsafed of so high and so great a grace, that by them he would repaire the overthrowen Churches, give life to the dead spirituallie, restore the overthrown glory of Preests, blot out & wash away with a fountaine of heavenly teares (which God put into the harts of the Bishops) those wicked, not bookes, but blottes and blurres, of new impietie, finally to restore almost the whole world (shaken with the cruell tempest of upstart heresie) to the antient faith, from new errour, to old soberness, from new madnesse, to antient

sight,

light, from new darkneſſe. But in this divine vertue which they ſhewed in the confeſſion of their faith this thing is eſpecially of us to be noted, that in that antiquitie of the Church they took upon them not the defence of any one part, but of the whole. For it was not lawfull that ſuch excellent and famous men, ſhould maintaine and defend with ſo great might and maine the erroneous ſuſpicions, and thoſe contrary each to other, of one or two men; or ſhould ſtand in contention for the temerarious conſpiracie of ſome ſmall Province, but they did chuſe by following the Canons and decrees of the Catholick and Apoſtolike veritie of all the Prieſts of holy Church, rather to betray themſelves, then the univerſall ancient faith. For which fact of theirs they merited ſo great glorie that they are accounted not only Confeſſours but alſo juſtly and worthily the Princes

of

of all Confessours. Great therefore & surely divine was the example of these blessed Confessours, and of every true Catholick continually to be remembred who like the seven branched Candlestick, shining with the sevenfold gifts of the holy Ghost, delivered unto all posterity a most notable example; how afterward in each fooliſh and vain errour, the boldnesse of profane novelrie was to be repressed with authority of sacred Antiquity.

Chap. III.

NEither is this any new thing, but alwaies usual in the Church of God, that the more religious a man hath been the more ready hath he alwayes resisted novell inventions, examples whereof many might be brought, but for brevity sake I will onely make choice of some one which shall be taken from the Apostolick

ſtolick ſea, by which all men may ſee moſt plainly with what force alwayes, what zeal, what indeavour the bleſſed ſucceſſion of the bleſſed Apoſtles have defended the integrity of that religion which they once received. Therefore in times paſt *Agrippinus* of venerable memory Biſhop of *Carthage*, the firſt of all mortall men maintained this aſſertion againſt the divine Scripture, againſt the rule of the univerſall Church, againſt the mind of all the Prieſts of his time, againſt the cuſtom and tradition of his forefathers, that rebaptization was to be admitted and put in practiſe. Which preſumption of his procured ſo great dammage and hurt to the Church, that not onely it gave all hereticks a pattern of ſacrilege, but alſo miniſtred occaſion of errour to ſome Catholicks. When therefore every where all men exclaimed againſt the no-

novelty of the doctrine, and all priests in all places, each one according to his zeale did oppose, then Pope *Steven* of blessed memory, bishop of the Apostolique see, resisted in deed with the rest of his fellow bishops, but yet more then the rest, thinking it as I suppose, reason so much to excell all other in devotion towards the faith, as he was superiour to them in authoritie of place. To conclude in his Epistle which then was sent to Africk, he decreed the same in these words. *That nothing was to be innovated, but that which came by tradition ought to be observed.* For that holy and prudent man knew well, that the nature of pietie could admit nothing else but only to deliver and teach our children that religion and that faith which we received and learned of our forefathers, and that we ought to follow religion whither

it

it doth lead us, and not to lead religion whither it pleaſe us, and that nothing is more proper to Chriſtian modeſtie and gravitie, then not to leave unto poſteritie our own inventions, but to preſerve and keep that which our Predeceſſours left us. What therefore was then the end of that whole buſines? What elſe but that, which is common and uſuall, to wit, antiquitie was retained, novelltie exploded. But perhaps that new invention lacked patrons and defenders? To which I ſay on the contrary, that it had ſuch pregnant witts, ſuch eloquent tongues, ſuch number of defendants, ſuch ſhew of truth, ſuch teſtimonies of ſcripture, but [illegible] after a new and naughtie faſhion, that all that conſpiracie and ſchiſme ſhould have ſeemed unto me invincible, had not the very profeſſion of novelltie it ſelf, ſo taken in hand, under that name defended

ded, with that title recommended, overthrowen the very ground of so great a schisme. To conclude, what force had the Councell or decree of Africke? By Gods providence none, but all things there agreed upon were abolished, disanulled, abrogated, as dreames, as fables, as superfluous. And O strange change of the world, the authours of that opinion are judged and thought Catholicks, the followers accounted and reputed Hereticks, the maisters discharged, the scholers condemned, the writers of those books shall be children of the kingdome of Heaven, the maintainers of those books shall burne in Hell. For who doubteth but holy S. Cyprian, that light of all Saints, that lanterne of Bishops, and spectacle of Martirs, with the rest of his companions shall raigne with Christ for ever? And contrariwise who is so wicked to deny

deny that the *Donatists* and such other pestilent Heretickes, which by the authority of that Councell vaunt that they do practile rebaptization, shall burn for ever with the Devill and his Angels. Which judgement in mine opinion seemeth to have come from God, for their fraudulent dealing especially, which endeavouring under the cloak of an other mans name, cunningly to frame an heresie, commonly lay hold of some dark sayings of one antient Father or other, which by reason of the obscurity may seem to make for their opinion, to the end they may be thought, that whatsoever *I know not what* they bring forth to the world, neither to have been the first that so taught, neither alone of that opinion: whose wicked device in mine opinion is worthy of double hatred, both for that they fear not to sowe their poysoned seed of heresie amongst others,

and

and alſo becauſe they blemiſh the memory of ſome holy man, and as it were with profane hands caſt his dead aſhes into the wind, bringing with ſhame that to light, which rather with ſilence were to be buried, following therein the ſteps of their father *Cham*, who not onely neglected to cover the nakedneſſe of venerable *Noe*, but alſo ſhewed it to others to laugh at, by which fact of his he incurred ſo great a crime of impiety that his poſterity was ſubject to the malediction of his ſinne: *Gen. 9.* his bleſſed brethren doing far otherwiſe, who neither with their own eyes would violate the nakedneſſe of their reverend father, nor yet permit it to remain uncovered for others to behold, but going backward as the holy text ſaith, they covered him: which is as much as to ſay that they neither approved with heart, nor blazed with tongue the ho-

ly

ly mans fault, and therefore they and their posterity were rewarded with their fathers blessing. But to returne to our purpose.

CHAP. IIII.

WE have therefore much to fear the sacriledge of a changed faith, of a violated religion: from which fault not only the discipline of the ecclesiasticall decree doth restraine us, but the authoritie also of the Apostles censure deterreth. For all men know how gravely, how severely, how seriously the blessed Apostle S. *Paul* inveigheth against certaine which with great levitie. *Gal.* 1. *Were so soon transferred from him that called thē into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel, which is not another.* 2 Tim. 4. *That had heaped up to themselves masters according to their own de-*

sires, averting their ears from truth being converted to fables: Having damnation because they have made void their first faith. 1 Tim. 5. Whom those men had deceaved of whom the same Apostle, in his epistle to the Romans thus writeth. *I beseech you brethren to mark them that make dissentions and scandals contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them, for such do not serve Christ our Lord but their own belly: And by sweet speeches and benedictions seduce the hearts of Innocents.* Rom. 16. *They enter into houses and lead captive silly women loaden with sins, which are led away with divers desires, alwaies learning and never attaining to the knowledge of truth.* 2 Tim. 3. *Vain speakers and seducers who subvert whole houses teaching the things they ought not for filthy lucre.* Tit. 1. *Men corrupt in their minds*

repro-

reprobate concerning the faith: 2 Tim. 3. *Proud, and knowing nothing but languishing about questions and strife of words; that are depraved of the truth, that esteem gaine to be pietie:* 1 Tim. 6. 1 Tim. 5. *And with all idle they learne to go from house to house, not only idle, but also full of words and curious, speaking things which they ought not:* 1 Tim. 1. *Which repelling a good conscience have made shipwrack about the faith: Whose prophane speeches do much grow to impietie, and their speech spreadeth as a canere.* But that is also worth the noting which is written of them. *But they shall prosper no further, for their folly shall be manifest to all as theirs also was.* 2 Tim. 2. 2 Tim. 3. When therefore such kind of men wandring up and downe through Provinces and Cities to set their errors to sale, came also unto the *Galathians*, who after

they had heard them and were de-
lighted with the filthie drugs of he-
reticall Novelty, casting up again
the heavenly Manna of the Apostol-
lick and Catholick doctrine; The
Apostle used his authoritie decreeing
very severely in this sort. *But al-
though* (quoth he) *we or an Angel
from heaven evangelize unto you be-
side that which we have evangeliz-
ed be he Anathema.* Gal. 1.

What meaneth this that he
sayeth *But although we*, why did
he not rather say *But although I?*
That is to say, although *Peter*, al-
though *Andrew*, although *John*, yea
finally although the whole company
of the Apostles evangelize unto you
otherwise then we have evangelized,
be he accursed. A terrible censure, for
maintaining the possession of the
first faith, not to have spared himself,
nor any other of the Apostles. But
this is a small matter: *Although an*

Angel

Angel from heaven (quoth he) *Evangelize unto you beside that which I have Evangelized be he Anathema*: he was not contented for keeping the faith once planted to make mention of mans weak nature unlesse also he included those excellent creatures, the Angells. *Although we* (quoth he) *or an Angel from heaven*, not becauſe the holy Angells of Heaven can now ſinne but this is the meaning of that he ſaith: Although (quoth he) that might be which cannot be, whoſoever he be that goeth about to change the faith which was once planted, be he accurſed. But peradventure he uttered thoſe words ſlightly and caſt them forth rather of humane affection then decreed them by any reaſon grounded in Gods word. God forbid: For it followeth, and that very earneſtly urged, very often repeated.

I have foretold you (quoth he) *and now againe I tell you. If any body evangelize unto you beside that which you have received be he Anathema.* He said not if any man preach unto you beside that which you have receaved let him be blessed, let him be commended, let him be receaved, but *Anathema*, that is, separated, thrust out, excommunicated, least the cruell infection of one sheep with his poisoned company corrupt the sound fleck of Christ. But peradventure this was given in commandment only to the *Galathians*: then likewise were these precepts following commanded onely to the *Galathians*, to wit. *If we live in the spirit, in the spirit also let us walk, let us not be made desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another*, Gal. 5. & such like which if it be absurd to say, and no man doubteth but that they were in-

indifferently commanded to all, then certaine it is, that as these precepts touching manners include all, so likewise those concerning faith and doctrine, except none. And therefore as it is not lawfull for any to provoke one another, to envy one another, even so it is unlawfull for any to admit or to receave any other faith or religion then that which the Catholick Church every where teacheth; or happily shall we be so mad to say that then it was commanded to curse and anathematize him that preached any otherwise then before had been preached, and that now it is not commanded, then was that likewise which is there said. *But I say walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh*, then onely commanded but now is not; which if it be impious & dangerous so to beleeve, then of necessitie it followeth that as these precepts of life &

manners are to be kept of all ages, so likewise those set down against innovating of religion and changing of faith, are commanded to all posteritie, wherfore to preach unto Christian Catholick men, besides that which they have received never was lawfull, no where is lawfull, nor ever shall be lawfull.

And on the contrarie to say *Anathema* and curse those which teach otherwise then once hath been received, was at all times needful, is every where convenient, & ever shall be requisite. Which being so, is there any man either so bold that dare teach that, which in the Church hath not been taught, or of such levitie that will receive ought besides that which he hath received of the Church. Let that vessel of election, that master of the Gentiles, that trump of the Apostles, that preacher of the world, he that was acquainted with

with heavenly affairs, cry out, and again cry out in his Epistles, to all men, to all times, to all places, that whosoever preacheth a new doctrine is to be accursed. And on the contrary part, let certain Frogs, corruptible Gnats and Flies, such as the *Pelagians* be, reclaim and that to Catholicks: We being your Authours (quoth they) we being your Leaders, we being your Interpreters, condemn that which before you did hold, hold that which before you condemned. Cast away your old Faith, your Forefathers Laws, your Elders Constitutions, and receive, what a Gods name? I tremble to speak, for they be so proud and presumptuous, that as they cannot be maintained without sin, so neither impugned without some blot of offence.

CHAP.

Chap. V.

But some man will say, why then doth God very often permit certain notable and excellent men in the Church to preach unto Catholicks a new Religion. A very good question and such as deserveth a more diligent and ample discourse unto which notwithstanding I will not answer out of mine own head, but with the authority of sacred Scripture, and the doctrine of a notable Master in Gods Church: let us then hear holy *Moses*, let him give us the reason, why learned men, and such as for their great gift of knowledge are called of the Apostle Prophets, be sometimes permitted to preach new Doctrine, which the old Testament Allegorically calleth strange gods, because their opinions are so observed and

honoured

honoured of Hereticks, as the gods were of the Gentiles: thus then writeth blessed *Moses* in *Deuteron.* 13. *If there shall arise* (quoth he) *in the middest of thee a Prophet, or one which saith he hath seen a dream,* that is some Master of the Church, whose Disciples or followers suppose to teach by some revelation from God: what then? *and shall foretell* (quoth he) *some sign or miracle, and that shall happen which he hath said*: some great Master is here surely meant, and one of so deep knowledge whom his followers imagine not onely to know things humane, but also to foresee future, and such as shall happen, which is farre above mans reach, as the scholers for the most part of *Valentinus, Donatus, Photinus, Apollinaris*, and such like did brag that their masters were. What followeth? *And shall* (quoth he) *say unto thee*

let

let us go and follow strange Gods, which thou knowest not, and let us serve them. What is meant by *strange Gods*, but forrein errours, *which thou knowest not*, that is new and never heard of before, *and let us serve them*, that is believe them, follow them. What then? *Thou shalt not* (quoth he) *hear the words of that Prophet or Dreamer.* And why I pray you; is not that forbidden by God to be taught, which is by God forbidden to be heard? *Because* (quoth he) *the Lord your God doth tempt you, that it may appear whether you love him or no, in your whole heart, and in your whole soul.* The reason then is more clear then day, why the providence of God doth sometime suffer certain teachers and masters of the Church to Preach certain new opinions that *your Lord God* (quoth he) *may tempt you.* And surely a great tentation it is, when as

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he whom you think a Prophet, a disciple of the Prophets, whom you esteem a Doctour and maintainer of the truth, whom you have highly reverenced, and most intirely loved, when he suddenly and privily bringeth in pernicious errours which neither you can quickly spy, lead away with prejudice of your old teacher nor easily condemn, hindered with love to your old master.

Chap. VI.

HEre some man haply doth earnestly desire to see that proved by some Ecclesiasticall examples which by the authority of *Moses* hath already been avouched. The demand is reasonable, and therefore of reason not long to be deferred. Wherefore to begin with those which are yet fresh in memory, and to the world best known. What kind

of

of tentation think you was that of late dayes, when that ungracious and curſed *Neſtorius* ſuddenly from a ſheep transformed into a wolf, began to devoure the flock of Chriſt, at ſuch time as thoſe which were ſpoiled, commonly took him for a ſheep, and therefore were more ſubject to his cruelty. For who would have eaſily imagined him to have erred, whom every man knew to have been choſen with ſuch judgement of the Empire, who was ſo highly in grace with the Clergy, ſo much beloved of all holy men, ſo greatly in favour with the people, who openly expounded the Scriptures, and alſo confuted the peſtiferous errour of the Jews: why could not this man, by ſuch meanes eaſily perſwade any, that he taught aright, preached aright, believed aright, who to ſmooth the way, and make entrance for his own here-

hereſie, perſecuted and preached againſt the blaſphemies of all others. But this was that which *Moſes* ſaith: *The Lord your God doth tempt you, if you love him or no.* And to paſſe over *Neſtorius* in whom was alwayes more admiration then profit, more fame then experience whom for ſome time humane favour had made greater, then Gods grace exalted. Let us rather ſpeak of them which endowed with many gifts and men of great induſtrie, have been no ſmall tentation to Catholicks. as amongſt the *Paunonians*, in our Fathers memory *Photinus* is recorded to have tempted the Church of *Sirminum*, in which being preferred with the liking of all men unto the dignity of Prieſthood, for ſometime he behaved himſelf very Catholickly but ſuddenly like that naughty Prophet or Dreamer of whom *Moſes* ſpeaketh, he began to

per-

perſwade the people of God committed to his charge, to follow other gods, that is ſtrange and unknown errours, which before they were not acquainted with. But as this is uſuall, ſo that was very pernicious, that he had ſo great helps and furtherance for the advancing of ſo great wickedneſſe: For he was both of an excellent wit, and ſingularly well learned, and paſſing eloquent, as he which both in diſputation and writing was copious and grave, in either language, as appeareth by the Books which he wrote, partly in Greek, and partly in the Latine tongue. But it hapned well that Chriſts ſheep committed to his charge very vigilant and careſull in keeping the Catholick faith, did ſpeedily remember *Moſes* warning, and therefore albeit they admired much the eloquence of their Prophet and Paſtour: yet were they not

ignorant of the temptation. And therefore whom before they followed as the chief leader of the flock, the same very man afterward they avoided as a ravening wolf. Neither do we learne only by *Photinus* but also by the example of *Apollinaris* the danger of this ecclesiasticall tentation, and therby also be admonished diligently to keep and retaine our faith and religion. For this *Apollinaris* procured his auditours great trouble & anguish of mind, whilest the authoritie of the Church drew them one way, and the acquaintance of their master haled them another, so that wavering and tottering betwixt both, they were uncertaine whether part was best to be followed. But haply he was such a one as easely deserved to be contemned. Nay he was so famous and worthie a man, that in very many things he vvon credite

dite to fast. For who surpassed him in sharpnes of wit? in exercise, in learning? how many heresies in many and great books hath he overthrown? how many errors against the faith hath he confuted? That most notable and great work of thirtie books in which with great waight of reason he confounded, the frantick cavills of *Porphirius* doth give credit to my report, and testifie the truth of my relation. It were too long to rehearse up all his works for which he might have been compared to the cheese pillours of Gods Church, had not the prophane licentiousnesse of hereticall curiositie, by inventing I know not what new opinion spotted and discredited all his former labours, whereby his doctrine was accounted not so much an edification, as an ecclesiasticall tentation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

HEre some man perhaps requireth to know what heresies these men above named taught: that is *Nestorius*, *Appollinaris*, & *Photinus*. This pertaineth not to the matter, whereof we now intreat, for it is not our purpose to dispute against each mans particuler error, but only by a few examples plainly and clearly to prove, that to be most true which *Moyses* saith, that if at any time any ecclesiasticall doctour, yea and a Prophet for interpreting the misteries of the prophetical visions, goeth about to bring in any new opinion into the Church, that the providence of God doth permit it for our proofe and triall. But because it will be profitable, I will by a little digression briefely set down what the forenamed hereticks

Photi-

Photinus, *Apollinaris*, and *Nestorius* taught. This then is the heresie of *Photinus*, he affirmeth that God is as the Jewes beleeve singular and solitary, denying the fulnesse of the Trinitie, not beleving that there is any person of the word of God, or of the holy ghost; he affirmeth also, that Christ was only man, who had his begining of the virgin MARY, teaching verie earnestly that we ought to worship only the person of God the father, and to honour Christ only for man. This then was *Photinus* opinion. now *Apollinaris* vaunteth much as though he beleved the unitie of Trinitie with full & sound faith but yet blasphemeth he manifestly against our Lords incarnation. For he saith that our Saviour either had not mans soul at all, or at least such a one, as was neither indued with mind or reason; furthermore he affirmeth that Christs body was not taken

of

of the flesh of the holy virgin Mary, but descended from heaven into the wombe of the Virgin, holding yet doubtfully & inconstantly some time that it was coeternall to the word of God, some time that it was made of the divinitie of the word: for he would not admit two maner of substances in Christ, the one divine, the other humane, the one of his Father, the other of his Mother, but did think that the verie nature of the word was divided into two parts, as though the one remained in God, and the other was turned into flesh, that wheras the truth saith, that Christ is one consisting of two substances, he contrary to the truth affirmeth, of the one divinitie of Christ to be two substances: and these be the assertions of *Apollinaris*. But *Nestorius* sicke of a contrarie disease whilest he faineth a distinction of two substances in Christ, sudden-

suddenly bringeth in two persons and with monstrous wickedness, will needs have two sonnes of God, two Christs, one that was God, and another that was man, one begotten of the Father, another begotten of his Mother. And therefore he saieth that the holy Virgin Mary is not to be called the mother of God, but the mother of Christ, because, that Christ which was borne of her was not God but man. And if any man think that in his books he saith there was one Christ and that he preached one person of Christ, I must needs confesse that he lacketh not ground to say so, for that he did either of craftie pollicie, the rather to deceave, that by some good things, he might the more easely perswade that which is evill, as the Apostle saith: *By the good thing he hath wrought me death.* R. 7. Wherfore either craftely as I said in certaine places of his

writings

writings he vaunteth to beleeve one person in Christ, or else surely he did hold, that after our Ladies deliverie, two persons became in such sort one Christ that yet in the time of our Ladies conception or deliverie, and for some time after, there were two Christs, and that Christ was born first like unto another man, and only was man and not yet joyned in unitie with the person of God the word, and that afterward the person of the word descended down assuming and joyning him self to that man in unitie of person, and although he now remaine in glorie assumpted for some time yet there seemeth to have been no difference betwixt him and other men. Thus then *Nestorius*, *Apollinaris*, *Photinus*, like mad doggs barked against the Catholick Church: *Photinus* not confessing the Trinity: *Apollinaris* maintaining the nature of

the

the Word convertible, and not confessing two substances in Christ, denying also either the whol soul of Christ, or at least that it was indued with mind and reason, beleeving for his pleasure what he liked of the second person in Trinitie: *Nestorius* by defending either alwayes or for some time two Christs. But the Catholick Church beleeving aright both of God and of our Saviour, neither blasphemeth against the misterie of the Trinitie, nor against the incarnation of Christ, for it worshipeth one Divinitie in Trinitie & reverenceth the equalitie of the Trinitie in one and the same majestie, confessing one Christ, not two, and the self same both God and man, beleeving in him one person, yet acknowledging two substances, but yet beleeving one person: two substances, because the word of God is not mutable that it can be turned into

into flesh: one person, least professing two sonnes, it may seeme to worship a quaternitie and not to adore the Trinitie.

CHAP. VIII.

BUt it is worth the labour to declare this matter more plainly, more substantially, more distinctly. In God is one substance and three persons; in Christ be two substances, but one person. In the Trinitie there is another, and another; but not another and another thing: In our Saviour is not another, and another, but another & another thing. How is there in the Trinitie another and another, but not another and another thing? Marry becaufe there is another person of the father, another of the sonne, and another of the holy ghost: But yet not another & another nature, but one & the self same: How

is there in our Saviour another and another thing, not another and another? because there is another substance of the divinitie, and another substance of the humanitie, but yet the deitie and the humanitie is not another and another, but one and the selfe same Christ, one and the same sonne of God, and one and the selfe same person, of the selfe same Christ and sonne of God. As in a man the body is one thing, and the soule is another thing, but yet the body and the soule are but one and the selfe same man. In *Peter* & *Paul* the soule is one thing, the body is another thing, and yet the body and the soule are not two *Peters*, nor the soule is not one *Paul*, and the body another *Paul*, but one and the selfe same *Peter*, one and the selfe same *Paul*, subsisting of a double & diverse nature of the body and the soule. So therefore in one and the selfe same

Christ

Christ there are two substances, but one a divine substance, the other humane, the one of God the Father, the other of the Virgin his Mother, the one coeternall and equall to the Father, the other substantiall to his Mother, yet one and the same Christ in both substances. Therefore there is not one Christ God, another Christ man, not one increated, another created, not one impassible, another passible, not one equal to the Father, another lesse then the Father, not one of the father, another of the mother, but one and the selfe same Christ, God and man, the same increated and created, the same incommutable and impassible, the same changed & suffered, the same equall and inferiour to the Father, the same begotten of his Father before all times, the same conceived of his Mother in time, perfect God and perfect man; in him

as God is perfect Divinitie, in him as man is perfect humanitie: perfect humanitie I say, because it had both soule and body, yet a true body, such as our body is, and such as his mothers was; and a soule indued with understanding, with mind & reason. There is therefore in Christ, the Word, the Soul, the Flesh, but yet all these together is one Christ, one son of God, our onely Saviour and Redeemer: One I say, not by any I know not what corruptible confusion, of the divinity and humanity together, but by a certain perfect, and singular unity of person: for that conjunction did not change or convert either into other (which is the proper errour of the *Arians*) but did rather so unite both in one, that as the singularity of one and the same person remayneth alwayes in Christ, so likewise the properties of both natures do for ever continue; so that

neither

neither God ever beginneth to be a body, nor now at any time ceaseth to be a body; which thing is also more apparent by some humane example: for not onely in this world, but also in the next every man shall consist of body and soul, & yet never shall either the body be changed into the soul, or the soul ever converted into the body; but as every man shall live for ever, so for ever of necessity in each man the difference of either substance shall continue: So likewise in Christ each property of either substance shall continue for ever, saving alwayes and reserving the unity of person. And when we often name this word *Person*, and say that the Sonne of God was made man, we must take great heed that we seeme not to say that God, the Word, the second person in Trinitie tooke upon him our actions onely in imitation, and

and rather in shew and shadow and not as a perfect and very man practised humane conversation: as we see used in Theaters and Stages, where one man in a little time taketh upon him many parts, of which notwithstanding himselfe is none; for as often as we counterfeit another mans actions, we so exercise his office, that yet we be not those men whose actions we take upon us; for neither a tragedie player (to use prophane examples and such as the *Maniches* alledge) when he playeth the Priest or King, is therefore a priest or king, for so soon as the tragedie endeth, that person also which he played forthwith ceaseth. God keep us from this horrible and wicked mockerie. Let this madnesse be proper to the *Maniches*, which preaching abroad their owne fantasies, affirme God the sonne of God not to have been substantively the person

person of man, but to have fained the same by supposed action and conuersation. But the Catholick faith affirmeth that the word of God was so made man, that he took upon him our nature & the proprieties belonging to the same, not deceitfully and in shew, but truely and verily, and did such things as belong to man, as his owne, and not as one that imitated other mens actions, and was verily that which in life and conversation he did shew himselfe to be, as we our selves also, in that we speak, understand and subsist, do not counterfeit our selves to be men, but are verily men. For neither *Paul* and *John* (to speak of them especially for example sake) were men by imitation, but by subsistence, neither likewise did *Paul* counterfeit the Apostle or faine himselfe *Paul*, but was in veritie an Apostle and was *Paul* by subsistence.

In like maner God the Word, by assuming and having flesh, in speaking, doing and suffering, in flesh, yet without any corruption of his nature, vouchsafed perfectly to performe this, to wit not that he should imitate or counterfeit, but exhibit himself a perfect man, not that he should seem or be thought a very man, but should in veritie so be and subsist. Therefore as the soule joyned to the flesh; and yet not turned into the flesh, doth not imitate a man, but is a man, and not a man in shew and appearance, but in substance: so God the Word without any conversion of himself, uniting himself to man, was made man, not by confusion, not by mutation, but by subsisting. Let that exposition therefore of a fained & counterfeit person utterly be rejected, in which alwayes one thing is in shew, another in deed, inwch. he that

doth

doth ought, is never the same person whom he representeth: for God forbid, that we should believe that God the Word took upon him the person of man, after such a deceitfull manner; but rather in this sort, That his substance remaining incommutable in it self, and yet taking upon him the nature of perfect man, was himself flesh, was himself a man, was himself the person of a man not deceitfully but truly, not in imitation, but in truth and substance; not finally after that sort which with action should desist, but after that manner which perfectly in substance should persist. This unity therefore of person in Christ was not framed, and finished after the Virgins delivery, but in her very womb. For we must diligently take heed that we confesse Christ not onely one, but also to have been alwayes one, because it is an intolerable blasphe-

my to grant him now to be one, and yet contend that once he was not one, but two, that is one after the time of his Baptisme, but two in the time of his Nativitie; which great sacriledge we cannot otherwise avoid, but by confessing that man was united to God in unity of person, not in his Ascention, not in his Resurrection, not in his Baptisme, but in his mothers womb, and immaculate conception: by reason of which Unity of Person, both the Proprieties of God are indifferently and promiscually attributed to man, and the proprieties of man ascribed to God: hence cometh that which is written in the Scripture, That the Son of man descended from Heaven, and the Lord of Majesty was Crucified upon earth: *Joan. 6.* hence also it proceedeth that we say, that when our Lords flesh was made, when our Lords body was framed,

that

that the very Word of God was made, the very wisdome of God was replenished with created knowledge, as in the foresight of God *His hands and feet are said to be digged, Psalm.* 21. From this unity of Person, I say it proceedeth, by reason of like mystery, that when the flesh of the Word of God was born of his pure and immaculate mother, we do most Catholickly believe that God himself the Word was born of the Virgin, and most impiously the contrary is maintained. Which being so, God forbid that any one should go about to deprive the holy *Virgin Mary* of the priviledges of Gods favour as her especiall glory: For she is by the singular grace of our Lord and God her son, to be confessed most truly and most blessedly to have been the mother of God, but yet not in such sort, as impious hereticks imagine

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and ſuſpect, who affirm, that ſhe is to be reputed in name onely and appellation the mother of God, as ſhe forſooth which brought forth that man which afterward became God, as we ſay, ſuch a woman is the mother of a Prieſt or Biſhop, not becauſe ſhe brought him that then was either Prieſt or Biſhop, but by generating that man which afterward was made a Prieſt or Biſhop: not in that manner I ſay the bleſſed Virgin is to be called the mother of God, but rather, becauſe, as hath been ſaid, that moſt holy myſtery was finiſhed in her ſacred womb, wherein by reaſon of a ſingular, and one onely unity of perſon, as the Word in fleſh is fleſh, ſo man is God is God.

Chap.

Chap. IX.

But now what hath already been said touching the foresaid heresies, or concerning the Catholick faith, let us in few words and compendiously for memory sake repeat them over again, that thereby with more facility they may be understood, and with greater certainty retained. Accursed therefore be *Photinus*, not admitting the fulnesse of the Trinity, and affirming our Saviour Christ to have been onely man. Accursed be *Appollinaris*, maintaining in Christ corruption of changed divinity, and bereaving him of the propriety of perfect humanity. Accursed be *Nestorius*, denying God to have been born of a Virgin, teaching two Christs, and so abandoning the faith of the Trinity, bringing in a quaternity. But blessed be

be the Catholick Church which adoreth one God in perfect Trinity, and likewise worshipeth equality of Trinity in one Divinity, so that neither singularity of substance confoundeth propriety of Persons, nor distinction of Trinity separateth unity of Deity. Blessed I say be the Church, which believeth in Christ two true and perfect substances, but one onely person, so that neither distinction of natures doth divide the unity of person, nor unity of person doth confound the difference of substances. Blessed I say be the Church, which, to the end she may confesse Christ alwayes to be and to have been one, acknowledgeth man united to God, not after our Ladies delivery, but even then in his mothers womb. Blessed I say be the Church, which understandeth God made man, not by any conversion of nature, but by reason and means of

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person, and that not a fained and transitory person, but substantially subsisting and permanent. Blessed I say be the Church, which teacheth that this unity of person hath so great force, that by reason thereof by a mystery strange and ineffable, she ascribeth unto man the proprieties of God, and attributeth to God the proprieties of man. For by reason of this unity of person she confesseth, that man as he was God, descended from Heaven; and God as he was man, was made upon earth, suffered and was Crucified. Blessed therefore is that venerable, happy, and sacred confession, and comparable to those supernall praises of the Angels, who do glorifie one onely Lord God, yet with a triple Hagiologie. For this is the principall reason why the Church teacheth the unity of Christ, lest otherwise she should exceed the mystery of the Trinity.

And

And let this suffice touching this matter, spoken by way of digression. hereafter if it please God, I will intreat and declare these points more copiously. Now to return to our former purpose.

Chap. X.

WE have said in the premisses, that in the Church of God, the errour of the master is a great tentation to the people, and the more learned he were that erred, so much the greater was the tentation. Which we shewed first by the authority of holy Scripture, afterward by the examples ecclesiasticall of those men, which for some time were reputed and accounted sound in faith, yet at last fell either into some other mans error, or els coined a new heresie of their own: This surely is a great matter, profitable to be learned

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and necessary to be remembred; which once again we must inculcate and make plain by great store of examples, that all Catholicks may know, that with the Church they ought to receive Doctours, and not with Doctours to forsake the faith of the Church. But I suppose that, although I could bring forth many to shew this kind of tentation, yet there is almost none which can be compared to the tentation of *Origen*, in whom were very many gifts, so rare, so singular, so strange, that in the beginning any would have thought that his opinions might have been believed of all men. For if life procureth authority, he was a man of great industry, of great chastity, patience, and labour: if family or learning, who more noble? being of that house which was honourable for Martyrdome, himself afterward for Christ deprived

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not of father onely, but also spoil
of all his patrimony, and so m
he profited in the mysteries of holy
poverty, that as it is reported, fo
the confession of Christs name he
often indured much affliction. Ne-
ther was he only adorned with thos
gifts, all which afterward serve
for tentation, but was indued also
with a force of wit so profound, so
quick, so elegant, that he far excelled
almost all other whatsoever. A man
of such wonderfull learning and en-
dition, that there were few things
in Divinity, in humane Philosophy,
haply nothing which he had not
perfectly attained: who having got-
ten the treasures of the Greek tongue,
laboured also about the Hebrew.
And for his eloquence what should
I speak of it, whose talk was so
pleasant, so delectable, so sweet, that
in mine opinion, not words but hony
flwed from his mouth? What
things

things were so hard to beleeve which with force of argument he made not plaine, what so difficult to bring to passe, which he made not to seem easie? But perchance he maintained his affections by arguments only. Nay, without question there was never any Doctour which used more examples of sacred scripture. But yet happelie he wrote not much. No man living more; yea so much that in mine opinion all his works are so far from being read over, that they can not possibbe all be found; who not to lack anie furtherance to learning, lived also untill he was passing old. But yet perchance unfortunate in his scholers. What man ever more happie, having trained up and been master to infinite Doctours, to Priests without number, to Confessours and Martyrs? Now who is able to prosecute with words, in what admiration he was with all men? in what

what glory? in what credit & grace? Who more zealous in religion repaired not to him, from the furthest parts of the world? What Christian did not almost worship him as a Prophet? What Philosopher did not honour him as a master? & how greatly he was reverenced, not only of private men, but also of the Empire it self, histories doe speak, which report that he was sent for of *Alexander* the Emperours mother, to wit, for the merit of his heavenly wisdome with the grace and love whereof he was inflamed. His epistles also testifie the same thing, which with the authoritie of a Christian master he wrote unto *Philip* the Emperour, the first Christian amongst all the Romane Princes. And if any man upon our report admiteth not the testimonie of a Christian touching his wonderfull knowledge, and learning, at least let him receive

the

confession of an heathen Philo-
ther. For that impious *Porphyrie*
h, that himself being but yet as
ere a boy, moved with his fame,
vailed unto *Alexandria* where
did see him being then old, but
such a one and so learned as he
had attained to the perfection
all knowledge. Time would soon-
ail me, then I could touch though
efly those notable gifts which
e in that man, all which not-
thstanding pertained not onely to
glory of Religion, but also to
greatnesse of the temptation. For
o is he that would willingly
ve forsaken a man of such wit,
so deep learning, of so rare grace,
d would not sooner have used
t saying, that he had rather erre
th *Origen* then believe aright
th others? And what should I
more, the matter came to that
t, that as the end shewed, not

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an usuall and common, but a pas
dangerous tentation of so wor
man, so famous a Doctour, so
ble a Prophet, carried very m
from the true and sound faith of
Church: For this *Origen* so
and singular a man, abusing
grace of God, too insolently flat
ing himself, too much in his o
wit, believing himself more th
reason would, little esteeming
old simplicity of Christian re
gion, presuming to be wiser then
other, contemning the traditions
the Church, and the old Fath
documents, waded so far in expou
ing certain chapters of the Scrip
after a new fashion, that he deni
ed that the Church of God sho
also say of him: *If there arise up*
the middest of thee a Prophet, a
a little after, *thou shalt not he*
(quoth he) *the words of that Pr*
phet, and again, *because* (quoth h
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your Lord God doth tempt you whether you love him or no. And surely it is not only a tentation, but also a great tentation, when a man seduceth secretly and by little and little the Church depending upon him (admiring his wit, knowledge, eloquence, conversation, and grace, nothing suspecting him, nothing fearing him) suddenly from the old religion to a prophane and new doctrine. But some will say that *Origens* books be corrupted: I will not gaine-say it, but rather wish it were so: for that hath both been said & written by some, not only Catholicks, but also Heretickes. But this is now the point we are to consider, that although not he, yet the books passing abroad under his name are a great tentation, which stuffed with many horrible blasphemies, are read and used, loved, and liked, not as the books of others, but as his works:

works : so that although *Origen* gave no cause of erroneous doctrine, yet his authoritie hath been the occasion why the errour hath been liked and followed.

The case also of *Tertullian* is the very same with the former : for as *Origen* is to be thought the best amongst the Greek Doctours, so *Tertullian* without controversie is the chief of all the latin. For who was more learned then hee ? Who in Divinitie or Humanitie more practised ? for by his great and wonderfull capacitie of wit, he attained to, and understood all Philosophie, all the sects of Philosophers, all their authours and patrons, all their learning, all sorts of histories and studies. And for his wit, was he not so excellent, so grave, so sharpe, that he almost undertook the overthrow of nothing which either by quickness of wit or weight of reason he crush-

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ed not in peeces? Now who is able to set down the commendation and praise which his stile and phrase of speech deserved, which was so fraught (I know not how) with that force of reason, that such as could not be perswaded, were compelled: whole almost so many words, were so many sentences, so many sences, so many victories? This is well known to *Marcion* and *Appelles*, well known to *Praxeas*, and *Hermogenes*, the Jews understand this, the Gentiles have tryed it, the *Gnosticks* have proved it, and divers others have felt it: whose blasphemous opinions he hath overthrown with his many and great volumes, as it had been with thunder & lightning. And yet this man after all this, this *Tertullian* I say, not holding the catholick religion, that is the universal & old faith being far more eloquent then faithful, changing afterward

his mind, did at last that which the blessed Confessour *Hilarie* in a certaine place writeth of him. *He discredited* (quoth he) *with his later errour his probable writings*: and therefore he was also a great tentation in the Church. But hereof I will say no more, onely this I add, that by his defending against the precept of *Moses*, for true propheſies the new madneſſe of *Montanus* ſpringing up in the Church, and thoſe mad dreams of new doctrine of that frantick woman, he deſerved that we ſhould alſo ſay of him and his writings: *If a Prophet ſhall riſe up in the midſt of thee*, and ſtraight after, *thou ſhalt not heare the words of that Prophet*. Why ſo? *Becauſe* (quoth he) *your Lord God doth tempt you whether you love him or no.* We ought therefore evidently to note by theſe ſo many, ſo great, and divers others ſuch weighty examples, and by the

law

law of Deuteronomie most clearly to understand that if at any time any ecclesiasticall teacher strayeth from the faith, that gods providence doth suffer that for our triall, whether we love him or no in our whol heart, & in our whol soul.

CHAP. XI.

WHich being so, he is a true and perfect sincere Catholick that loveth Gods truth, that loveth his body the Church, that preferreth nothing before the religion of God, nothing before the Catholick faith, not any mans authority, not love, not will, not eloquence, not philosophie, but contemning all these things, setled in faith, stable and permanent, whatsoever he knoweth the Catholick Church universally in old time to have holden, that he

purposeth with himself onely to hold and beleeve: and therefore whatsoever new doctrine, and not before heard of such a one perceives to be brought in, of some one man, beside or contrary to the old Saints and Doctors, let him know that doctrine doth not pertaine to religion, but rather to tentation, for his proofe and tryall, especially being instructed with the saying of the Apostle St. *Paul*: For this is that which he writeth in his first epistle to the *Corinthians*: *There must* (quoth he) *be heresies also that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.* As though he should say. This is the cause why the authors of heresies are not straight rooted out by God, that the approved may be made manifest, that is, every one may appear how steadfastly, faithfully and constantly, he loveth the Catholick faith. And certaine it

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is that straigh: upon the springing up of any Noveltie, the weighty corne is discerned from the light chaffe; then is that easily blown out of the floore which before lightly remained in the floore; for some by and by fly away, others onely shaken are both afraid to perish, and ashamed to returne remaining wounded, half dead, half alive, like unto those which have drunk so much poison, as neither killeth, nor well digesteth, neither bringeth death nor yet permitteth to live. O the miserable state of such persons! with what seas of cares, with what storms are they tossed! for some time as the wind driveth them, they are caried away headlong into errour, another time coming again to themselves, they are shaken and beaten like contrary waves striving together, sometime with rash presumption they allow such things as seem uncertain an

time of pusillanimitie they fear those things which are certaine, doubtfull which way to take, which way to return, what to desire, what to avoid, what to hold, what to let go: which miserie and affliction of a wavering and unsetled heart, were they wise, is as a plaister of Gods mercy towards them. For this is the reason why (being out of the safe port of the Catholick faith) they are shaken, tossed & almost killed with stormes and troubles to the end they should take down the sails of their proud mind, which they vainly hoised up to the winds of novelties, and so retire and keep themselves within the most sure port of their calme and good mother; and first cast up those bitter & turbulent waters of errours, that afterward they may drink of the flowing rivers of lively and pure water. Let them learn to forget that well, which well they never learned,

and

and those articles which the Church teacheth, and by reason are to be attained to; let them in Gods name endeavour to understand, and those which surpasse reason let them by faith beleeve.

CHAP. XII.

WHich being so often times calling to mind and remembring the self same thing, I cannot sufficiently marvel at the great madnesse of some men, at so great impietie of their blinded hearts, to conclude, at so great a licentious desire to err our, that they be not content with the rule of faith once delivered us, and received from our ancestors but do every day search & seek for new doctrine, ever desirous to add, to change, and to take away something from Religion, as though that were not the doctrine

of God, which was once sufficiently revealed, but rather mans institution which cannot but by continuall correction (or rather corruption) come to perfection.

Whereas the divine scriptures cry out: *Do not translate the bounds which thy fathers have set down*; and, *Do not judge over thy judge*; and, *the Serpent will bite him that cutteth the hedge*; and that saying of the Apostle by which all wicked novelties of all hereticks have often been cut in pieces, as it were with a spirituall sword, and alwayes hereafter shall be: *O Timothy keep the depositum, avoiding the prophane novelties of voyces, and oppositions of falsly called knowledge, which certain promising have erred about the faith.* And yet for all this, some there be so shameles, so impudent, so obstinate, as not to yield to such force of divine scripture, not to be moved

moved with such weight of reason, nor yet shaken with such heavenly hammers, to conclude, which will not be beaten in pieces with such celestiall lightning. *Avoid* (saith he) *the profane novelties of voices.* He saith not avoid antiquities, he saith not avoid antientness; nay rather, sheweth what contrariwise should follow. For if novelty is to be avoided, antiquity is to be retained; if novelty be profane, antiquity is sacred. *And oppositions* (quoth he) *of falsly called knowledge.* Verily the name of knowledg in the Schools of Hereticks is false, where ignorance is called knowledge; mist, reputed clearnesse; and darknesse termed by the name of light. *Which certain* (quoth he) *promising have erred about the faith.* What promised they, when they erred about the faith? What else, but I know not what new and unknown

doctrine? For you may hear some of them say, O ye unwise and silly souls, which commonly are called Catholicks, come and learn the true faith, which no creature understandeth besides us, which hath been hidden many hundred of years past, but of late hath been revealed and laid open: but learn it privily, learn it secretly, for it will delight you. And again, when you have learned it, teach it secretly, that the world may not understand it, that the Church may not know it; for it is granted to few to understand the secret of so great a mystery. Are not these, think you, the words of that Harlot, which in the *Proverbs* of *Solomon* calleth unto her the passengers: *Who is* (quoth she) *most fool amongst you, let him turn unto me.* Proverbs 9. And such as be of small judgement, she exhorteth, saying:

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Touch willingly secret bread, and drink sweet water privily. What followeth? *But he knoweth not* (quoth he) *how in her company earthly men do perish.* Who be these earthly men? Let the Apostle declare: *Those* (quoth he) *which have erred about the faith.* But it is worth the labour most diligently to examine the Apostle his whole Chapter. *O Timothy* (quoth he) *keep the depositum, avoiding profane novelties of voices.* This exclamation O, both sheweth foresight, and also argueth charity: for he foresaw certain errours which before-hand he was sorry for. Who at this day hath the place of *Timothy*? but either the whole Church, or especially, the whole body of Prelates, who ought themselves to have the whole knowledge of divine religion, and also to instruct others, what is meant by *keep the depositum.*

tum. Keep it (quoth he) for fear of thieves, for danger of enemies, leſt when men be a ſleep they ouerſowe Cockell amongſt the Wheat, which the ſonne of man hath ſowed in his field. *Keep* (quoth he) *the depoſitum*: What is meant by this *depoſitum*? that is, that which is committed to thee, not that which is invented of thee: that which thou haſt received, not that which thou haſt deviſed: a thing not of wit, but of learning: not of private uſurpation, but of publick tradition: a thing brought to thee, not brought forth of thee: wherein thou muſt not be an authour, but a keeper: not a beginner, but a follower: not a leader, but an obſerver: *Keep the depoſitum*. Preſerve the talent of the Catholick faith pure and ſincere, that which is committed to thee, let that remain with thee, and that deliver

unto the people. Thou hast received gold, render them gold; I will not have one thing for another. Do not for gold give me either impudently lead, or craftily brasse; I will not the shew, but the very nature of gold it self. O *Timothy*, O *Priest*, O Teacher, O Doctour, if Gods gift hath made thee meet and sufficient for thy wit, exercise and learning, shew thy self *Beseelel*, that divine workman in building of the spirituall tabernacle, ingrave those precious stones of Gods religion, faithfully set them, wisely adorn them, give them brightnesse, give them grace, give them beauty. That which men before believed obscurely, let them by thy exposition understand more clearly. Let posterity rejoyce for coming to the knowledge of that by thy means, which antiquity without that knowledge had in veneration. Yet for all this, in such sort de-

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liver what thou hast learned, that albeit thou teachest newly and after a new manner: yet thou never preach a new religion, and deliver a new faith.

Chap. XIII.

But peradventure some will say, shall we then have no advancement of religion in the Church of Christ? no growing on, no proceeding forward? To which I answer and say. Let us a Gods name have the greatest and most that may be. For who is either so envious to men, or hatefull to God which would labour to stop or hinder that? but yet in such sort and with this proviso, that it may appear to be truly an increase in faith, and not prove to be a change in religion, for this is the nature of such things as increase, that in themselves they become

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and grow greater; and this is the nature of a change and mutation, that ſomething be turned from one thing which it was, to an other which it was not: Convenient it is, and very neceſſary, that the underſtanding, knowledge and wiſdome, aſwell of every man in particular, as of all in common; aswell of one alone, as of the whole Church in Generall, of all ages and times paſt, ſhould abundantly increaſe and go forward, but yet for all that, onely in his own kind and nature; that is, in the ſame faith, in the ſame ſenſe, in the ſame ſentence. In this caſe, let the religion of our ſoul imitate the nature of our bodies, which although with proceſſe of time they paſſe over many years, yet they remain the ſame that they were. There is great difference betwixt flouriſhing youth and withered

thered age, yet the self same men become old which before were young; so that although the state and condition of one and the self same man be altered, yet one very nature and person doth still remain. The limbs and members of infants be small, of young men great, yet not divers but the very same. So many joynts as young children have so many have they when they be men, and if any parts there be, which with increase of years spring forth, those before by nature were in man virtually planted, so that no new things come forth in old men, which before were not contained in them being yet children. Wherefore there can be no doubt, but that this is the due and right order of growing, the most naturall and goodlyest way of increasing, onely to have in old years, those members, those parts and joynts which

the wisdome of our Creatour before framed when we were yet but little ones: And therefore if a man be afterward changed into some other shape or likenes then his nature requires; or if the number of his members be more or lesse then nature prescribeth; then of necessitie the whole body must either perish, or become monstrous, or at least remaine lame and maimed. In like manner Christian religion must follow these rules of increasing and growing; to wit, that with years it waxe more sound, with time it become more ample, with continuance it be more exalted, yet remaine pure and incorrupt, and continue full and perfect with each of his parts, and as it were, with all his members and proper senses: And furthermore that it admit no change or mutation, sustaine no losse of his proprietie, no varietie or mutabilitie in definition:

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for example sake. Our forefathers in old time in the spiritual field of the Church, sowed the wheaten seed of true faith and religion; it were now very injurious and unreasonable, that we their posteritie in stead of the perfect and true graine should reape the false errour of cockle: And contrariwise it is reason and very convenient, that the beginning and ending not disagreing with it self, we should of the increase of wheaten seed reape the fruit of a wheaten religion; so that when with tract of time, any of those first seeds beginne to bud and come forth, let them be tilled, let them bee trimmed, yet without changing ought of the proprietie of the corn springing up: and albeit fashion, shape, and distinction, be added and put to, yet must the nature of each kind remain and abide. For God forbid that those rosie plants of the Catho-

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lick doctrine should be changed into thistles and thornes; God forbid I say, that in this spirituall paradise, of the slippes of Cinamon and Balsame should suddenly grow up darnel and poison. Therefore whatsoever hath by the grace of God and our Fathers faith been sowen in this Church, reason it is that the same be cultivated and maintained by the industry of the children, meet that it flourish & waxe ripe, convenient that it grow and come to perfection; lawfull indeed it is, that those ancient articles of heavenly philosophie, should be trimmed, smoothed, and polished: but unlawfull that they should be chaned, mangled, and maimed. And albeit they receive perspicuitie, light, and distinction, yet of necessitie must they retaine their fulnes, soundnes, and proprietie. For if once this licentiousnes of wicked fraud be admitted,

mitted, I tremble to ſpeak what danger is like to enſue of raſing and ſubverting religion; for if we take away any part of the Catholick faith, ſtraight waves other parts, and after that other, and againe other, and that as it were of cuſtome and by a kind of law, ſhall be aboliſhed. And what followeth when every part by little and little is undermined, but that in concluſion the whole corps of religion at one blow become ſubverted and over thrown? And contrariwiſe if new things and old, forreine and domeſticall, prophane and ſacred, begin once to be confounded together, then muſt needs this cuſtome generally follow, that nothing hereafter remaine in the Church untouched, nothing without corruption, nothing ſound, nothing pure, nothing ſincere; and ſo where before was the ſacred ſchool of chaſt and immaculate truth, there

ſhall

shall be a very brothel house of wicked & filthie errours. But God of his goodnes deliver his servants from such minds and let the impious rather, & graceless follow that furious & mad proceeding. For the Church of Christ is a carefull & diligent keeper of religion committed to her charge, she never changeth or altereth in it any thing, she diminisheth nothing, she addeth nothing: What is necessarie she loseth not; what is superfluous she forceth not, her own she maintaineth, what is not her own shee usurpeth not, but with all industrie laboureth only about this one thing, that is, by faithfull & prudent handling of our forefathers doings, what by them in times past was well entered & begun, she polisheth; what then was well polished and declared she confirmeth; what then was confirmed and defined, she retaineth. To conclude what hath she else

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endeavoured by the decrees of Councells, but that that doctrine which before was simplie credited, the same afterward should be more diligently beleeved: that religion which before was taught more slowly, the same afterward should be preached more instantly: That faith which before was more securely reverenced, the same afterward should more carefully be practised. This I say alwayes and nothing els hath the Church, provoked with the novelties of Hereticks, set down by the decrees of her Councels, to wit, onely to confirme that to posteritie by writing (comprehending a great summe of things in few words, & often times for more ease understanding, to an old article of faith giving a new name) which before by tradition she had received of her forefathers.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

But to return to the Apostle. O Timothie (quoth he) *keep the depositum, avoyd prophane novelties of voices.* Avoid (quoth he) as a viper, as a scorpion, as a basilisk, least they infect thee, not only by touching, but also with their very eyes and breath. What is meant by *Avoid?* 1 Cor. 5. that is, not so much as to eate with any such: what importeth this (*Avoid*) *if* any man (quoth he) *come unto you and bring* not *this doctrine?* what doctrine but the Catholick and universall, & that which with sound tradition of the truth, hath continued one & the self same, through all successions of times, and that which shall continue to the worlds end? What then? *Receive him not* (quoth he) *into the house nor say God save you for he that saieth*

sayeth unto him God save you, communicateth with his wicked works, Prophane novelties of voices; (quoth he) What is *Prophane*? Those which have no holines in them, no jote of religion, wholly unknown to the Church which is the temple of God. *Prophane novelties of voices*, quoth he, (*of voices*) that is novelties of opinions, novelties of things, novelties of senses, contrarie to our forefathers faith, contrarie to antiquitie, which if we admit and receive, of necessitie the faith of our blessed ancestours, either all, or a great part of it, must be overthrown, the faithfull people of all ages and times, all holy Saints, all chast, all continent, all virgins, all widowes, all Clerks, all Deacons, all Priests, so manie thousands of Confessours, so many bands of Martyrs, so many famous and great cities, and commonwealths, so manie Islands, Provinces,

vinces, Kings, countries, kingdomes, nations, to conclude, almost the whol world incorporated by the Catholick faith to Christ their head must needs be saied, so many hundreds of years to have been ignorant, to have erred, to have blasphemed, to have beleeved they know not what. *Avoid* (quoth he) *Prophane nevelties of voices*, to receive which, to follow which never was the custome of Catholicks, but alwayes the propertie of hereticks. And to say truth, what heresie hath ever peeped forth, but under the name of some certain man, in some certaine place, and at some certaine time? Who ever set abroach any heresie, who first devided not himself from the consent of the universality and antiquity of the Catholick Church? Which to be true, examples do plainly prove. For who ever before that prophane

Pelagius presumed so much of man's free will, that he thought not the grace of God necessary to every particular good act? Who ever before his monstrous disciple *Celestius* denyed all mankind to be tyed and bound with the sin of *Adams* prevarication? Who ever before sacrilegious *Arius*, durst tear in peeces the Unity of Trinity? Who ever before wicked *Sabellius*, attempted to confound the Trinity of Unity? Who ever before cruell *Novatian*, affirmed God to be so mercilesse, that he had rather the death of a sinner then he should returne and live? Who ever before *Simon Magus* (punished by Apostolicall censure, from whom that old sink of filthinesse came by continuall and secret succession unto *Priscillian* that was the last) durst ever affirme that God our Creatour was the Authour of evill, that is the Authour of our wick-

wickednes, impietie, and horrible crimes, because God (as he said) so made mans nature, that by a certain proper motion and impulse of an inforced will, it can do nothing else but sinne, desire nothing else but to offend, because being provoked and inflamed with the furious rage of all vices, it is with an insatiable desire carryed away headlong into the pit and sink of all filthinesse? Such examples are infinite, which for brevity sake I omit; by all which notwithstanding it appeareth plainly and clearly that it is an usuall and common thing in all Heresies, to take great pleasure in prophane novelties, to loath the decrees of our forefathers, and so fall from the faith, by pretending the false and counterfeit name of knowledge and learning: contrariwise that this is proper to all Catholicks, to keep that faith which the holy fathers have left

and committed to their charge, to condemne prophane novelties, and the Apostle hath already said, & again doth say: *If any man shall preach otherwise then that which is received, to accurse him.*

CHAP. XV.

HEre happily some man may demand whether hereticks also do use the testimony of holy scripture. To which I say that they do and that very earnestly, for a man may behold them ranging & coursing in every part of the Bible, in *Moses*, in the Kings, in the *Psalms*, in the Apostles, in the *Gospels*, in the Prophets: for whether they be amongst their own brethren, or with strangers, whether in private or in publick, whether in talking, or writing, whether in the house feasting, or abroad walking, they almost never alleadge any thing of their owne, which they do not pretend to shadow

dow with the words of sacred scripture. Read the pamphlets of *Paulus Samosatenus*, of *Priscilian*, *Eunomius*, *Jovinian*, and the rest of such like pestilent Hereticks, and you shall find through all their works an huge heap of examples, almost no page omitted which is not coloured and painted with the sayings of the new and old testament. But the more closely they lurk under the shadow of Gods law, the more carefully are they to be feared, the more narrowly to be watched; for they know full well that their stinking and unsavory drugs be not likely almost to please any, if simply & nakedly they be set forth: and therefore they do temper them as it were with the sweet powder of Gods word, that he wch would have contemned mans erroneous invention dares not so readily reject Gods divine scripture: wherein they are like to those, which minding

to minister bitter potions to your children, do first annoint the brim of the cup with hony, that thereby unwary youth feeling the sweetness may nothing feare the bitter confection. This devise also practise they which upon noxious herbs and juyces, write the names of good & wholsome medicines, whereby almost no man reading the good superscription any thing suspecteth the lurking poyson. The self same thing likewise our Saviour crieth out to all Christians. *Take ye heed of false prophets which come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves. Ma. 7.* What is meant else by sheeps clothing, but the sayings of the Prophets and Apostles, which they with sheep-like sincerity did weare like certaine fleeces of that immaculate Lamb, *which taketh away the sins of the world?* And what is to be understood by ravening

wolves

wolves, but the cruell and desirous of the opinions of heretickes, which alwayes trouble the sheep-folds of the Church, and by all means possible teare in pieces the flock of Christ? But to the end they may more craftily set upon the sheep of Christ, not shrinking nothing remaining still cruel beasts, they put off their wolvish weed, and shroud themselves with the words of scripture, as it were with certain fleeces, whereby it happeneth, that when the silly sheep feel the soft wooll, they little fear their sharp teeth: But what saith our Saviour? *By their fruits you shall know them.* That is, when they begin not only to utter those words, but also to expound them, not only to cast them forth, but also to interpret them, then doth that bitterness break out, then is that sharpness espied, then is that madness perceived, then is that fresh & new poison ejected, then are pro-

phane novelties set abroach, then may you see straight-way the holy cut in two, the old fathers bounds removed, the Catholick doctrine shaken, and the Churches faith torn in pieces. Such were they whom the Apostle sharply reprehendeth in the 2. Epistle to the Cor. Chap. 11: *For such false Apostles* (quoth he) *are crafty workers transfiguring themselves into the Apostles of Christ.* What is transfiguring themselves into the Apostles of Christ, but this? The Apostles alleaged the examples of scripture & they likewise cited the: The Apostles cited the authority of the Psalms, & they likewise used it: The Apostles used the sayings of the Prophets, and they in like manner brought them forth. But when that scripture which was alike alleadged, alike cited, alike brought forth, was not alike, & in one sense expounded, then were discerned the simple from the craftie, the sincere from the

counterfeit, the right and good from the froward and perverse: and to conclude, the true Apostles from those false Apostates. And no marvel (saith S. Paul) *For Sathan himself transfigureth himself into an Angel of light, it is no great matter therefore if his ministers be transfigured as the ministers of Justice.* Wherefore according to Saint *Paul*, whensoever either false Apostles, or false Prophets, or false Doctours do bring forth the words of holy Scripture, by which they would according to their corrupt interpretation confirm their errour, there is no doubt, but that they follow the crafty slight of their master, which surely he would never have invented, but that he knoweth very well, that there is no readier way to deceive the people, then where the bringing in of wicked errour is intended, that there the authority of the word of God should

be pretended. But some will say, how prove you that the Devill useth to alledge the Scripture? Such as doubt thereof let them reade the Gospel, where it is written: *Then the devill took him up* (that is our Lord and Saviour) *and set him upon the pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Sonne of God, cast thy self down, for it is written that he will give his Angels charge of thee, that they may keep thee in all thy wayes, in their hands shall they hold thee up, lest perhaps thou knock thy foot against a stone. Mat. 4.* How will he, think you, handle poor silly souls, which so setteth upon the Lord of Majestie with the authority of Scripture? *If thou be* (quoth he) *the Son of God, cast thy self down.* Why so? *For it is written* (quoth he): we are diligently to weigh the doctrine of this place and to keep it in mind, that by so notable an example of the Scripture,

we make no scruple or doubt, when we see any alledge some place of the Apostles, or Prophets, against the Catholick Faith, but that by his mouth the Devil himself doth speak. For as at that time, the head spake unto the head; so now the members do talk unto the members; that is, the members of the Devil to the members of Christ; the faithlesse to the faithfull, the irreligious to the religious, to conclude, Hereticks to Catholicks. But what I pray, saith the Devil? *If thou be the Sonne of God* (quoth he) *cast thy self down*. That is to say? Desirest thou to be the Son of God, and to injoy the inheritance of the kingdome of Heaven, *Cast thy self down*, that is, Cast thy self down from this doctrine and tradition of this high and lofty Church, which is reputed to be the Temple of God. And if any one demand of these Hereticks, perswading them such things, how

do you prove and convince me that I ought to forsake the old and Universall Faith of the Catholick Church; straight wayes is ready at hand: *For it is written*: and forthwith he will alledge you a thousand Testimonies, a thousand Examples, a thousand authorities out of the Law, out of the Psalms, out of the Apostles, out of the Prophets; by which, expounded after a new and wicked fashion, he would throw headlong unfortunate souls, from the Tower of the Catholick Church, into the deep dungeon of wicked Heresie. Now with these sweet promises which follow, Heretick do wonderfully deceive simple men. For they dare promise and teach that in their Church, that is in the conventicle of their communion, is to be found a great and speciall, yea and a certain personall grace of God: So that whosoever be one of their crew, they shall straight-

wayes without any labour, without any ſtudy, without any induſtry, yea although they never ſeek, nor crave, nor knock, have ſuch ſpeciall diſpenſation, that they ſhall be carried up with the hands of Angels; that is, preſerved by Angelicall protection; that they never hurt their foot againſt a ſtone, that is, that they never can be ſcandalized. But ſome man will ſay, If the Devil and his Diſciples, whereof ſome be falſe Apoſtles, falſe Prophets, and falſe Teachers, and all perfect Hereticks, do uſe the Scriptures, cite their ſayings, bring forth their promiſes; what ſhall Catholick men do? How ſhall the children of the Church behave themſelves? How ſhall they in the holy Scriptures diſcern truth from falſhood? To which I anſwer, that, They muſt have great care (as in the beginning of this Treatiſe I ſaid, holy and learned men taught me) that they in-

terpret the Divine and Canonicall Scripture according to the Tradition of the Universall Church, according to the rules of the Catholick doctrine: in which likewise they must of necessity follow, universality, antiquity, and consent of the Catholick and Apostolick Church. And therefore, if at any time a part rebell against the whole, novelty against antiquity, the dissention of one or a few (seduced with errour) against the consent of all, or the farre greater part of Catholicks; in that case let them preferre the integrity of universality, before the corruption of a part; and in universality, let them also preferre the religion of antiquity before profane novelty; and again in antiquity, let them preferre, before the temerity of one or a few, the decrees of a generall Councell, if any be; or if no such be found, let them take that which is next hand;

hand, that is, to follow the opinions of many and great learned Doctours agreeing together: All which faithfully, soberly, diligently observed and kept; by Gods grace, we shall without any great difficulty discover the errours of new upstart Hereticks.

CHAP. XIV.

HEre I perceive in order it followeth, to shew by examples how the profane novelties of Hereticks are, by bringing forth and comparing the old Doctours opinions agreeing together, to be found out and condemned: which ancient consent of holy Fathers, is not so carefully and diligently to be sought for and followed in every small question of the Scripture; but onely, and that especially in the rule of faith; neither yet alwayes, nor all Heresies

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are after this sort to be impugned but onely such as be new and upstart; to wit, at their first springing up, and before they have (as hindred by the shortnesse of time) falsified the rules of the antient faith, and before the poyson spreading farre abroad, goeth about to corrupt the Fathers works: But those heresies which have already got ground, and be of some continuance, are not this way to be dealt withall; because by long tract of time they have had opportunity to steal truth. And therefore such kind of profane schisms and heresies which be of longer standing, we must not otherwise convince, but either onely, if need be, by the authority of the Scriptures, or els avoid and detest them being already convicted and condemned in old time by generall Councels of the Catholick Church. Therefore so soon as any infectious error begineth to breake forth,

forth, and for her defence to steale certain words of holy scripture, and craftily and fraudulently to expound them; straight-wayes for the right understanding thereof the Fathers opinions are to be gathered togither, by which let any what soever new, and therefore prophane, doctrine growing up with out all delay be dejected & speedily condemned. But those Fathers opinions only are to be conferred togither which with holinesse, wisdome, and constancy, lived, taught, and continued in the faith, and communion of the Catholick Church, and finally deserved to dy in Christ, or happily for Christ to be martyred: whom notwithstanding we are to beleeve with this condition, that whatsoever either all, or the greater part with one mind, plainly, commonly, and constantly, as it were a Councell of Doctours, agreeing togeather have decreed and set down, receiv-

receiving it from their anceſtours, holding it for their time, and delivering it to their poſteritie; let that be had and accounted for undoubted, for certain and firme truth. And whatſoever any, although holy and learned, although a Biſhop, although a Confeſſour, and Martyr hath holden otherwiſe then all, or againſt all, let that be put aſide from the authoritie of the common, publick, and generall faith, and reputed amongſt his own proper, private, and ſecret opinions, leaſt with great danger of eternall ſalvation, we do according to the cuſtome of ſacrilegious Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, forſake the trueth of the univerſall faith, and follow the novell errour of ſome one man. The holy & Catholick mind of which bleſſed Fathers leaſt any man think that he may raſhly contemne, The Apoſtle ſayeth in his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians: And

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some verily hath God set in his Church, first Apostles 1 Cor. 12. of which himself was one: Secondly Prophets as Agabus was, of whom we read in the Acts, cap. 11. Thirdly Doctours, which now are called Traditours, whom also this Apostle some time nameth Prophets, (because their office was to expound and declare to the people the mysteries of the Prophets;) these therefore, disposed and placed by God at divers times and sundry places, agreeing and consenting all in one mind in Christ, touching the understanding of the Catholick faith whosoever contemneth, doth not contemne man but God: and that we dissagree not by any means from the perfect and true unitie of those Fathers, the same Apostle doth earnestly beseech all Christians, saying: *I beseech you brethren that you say all one thing, and that there bee no*

schisms

Schismes among you, but that you be perfect in one sense and in one knowledge. 1 *Cor.* 1 And if any man separate himself from the communion of their opinion, let him hear that saying of the same Apostle: *He is not the God of dissention, but of peace:* ch. 14. that is, not of him that leaveth consent and unity, but of them that remain in peace and agreement: *As I do* (quoth he) *teach in all the Churches of the Saints,* that is, of the Catholicks, which therefore be holy because they continue in the communion of the faith. And least happily any one should contemne others, and proudly require onely to be heard, onely to be beleeved, straight after he saith: *What hath the Word of God* (quoth he) *proceeded from you, or hath it onely come unto you?* And least this might be taken as spoken slightly, he addeth: *If any* (quoth he) *seemeth a*

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Prophet or spirituall, that is, a master in spirituall matters, let him be a zealous lover of unity and peace, in such wise that he neither preferre his own opinion before the judgement of others, neither leave or forsake the sense and common consent of all men. *The commandements of which things he that is* (quoth he) *ignorant of*, that is, he that learneth not those things which he yet knoweth not, or contemneth those which he knoweth, *he shall not be known*, that is, he shall be thought unworthy, whom amongst such as be united in faith and equall humility, God should regard and look upon: a greater evil then wch I doubt whether any man can invent or devise; which yet notwithstanding (according to the Apostles commination) we see to have fallen upon *Julian* the *Pelagian*, who either contemned to be joined at all in opinion with

with his fellows, or else presumed to separate himself from their fociety and communion.

But now it is time to bring forth the example which we promised, how and after what sort the judgement and opinions of holy Fathers were gathered together, that according to them by the decree & authority of a Councell the rule of faith might be set down: which to the end that I may more commodiously do, I will here make an end of this commonitorie, and so take another beginning for declaring of those things which do follow.

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A Recapitulation of all that hath been said in the former two books.

WHich being so, it is now time that in the end of this second book we recapitulate & touch in few words the Summe of all that which in these two commonitorie books hath been spoken. We saied in the premisses that this alwaies hath been, and at this day is the custom of Catholikes to try and examine true faith two manner of waies. First by the authoritie of the divine scripture: secondly by the tradition of the Catholick Church; not because the Canonicall scripture is not

as to it self sufficient for all things but because very many expounding Gods word at their own pleasure do thereby bring forth and hatch up divers opinions and errours. And for that cause it is necessary that the interpretation of the divine Scripture be directed according to the one onely rule of the Churches understanding: especially in those questions upon which the foundation of the whole Catholick religion doth depend. Likewise we said that in the Church we were to consider the consent both of universality, and antiquity, so that we be neither carried away from sound unity to schism, nor yet cast headlong from antiquity of religion into the dangerous gulf of heretical novelties. We said also that in antiquity we were diligently to observe and seriously to consider two things, unto which all those that will not be hereticks must of necessity stand. The

first

first is, that which hath in old time been determined by all the Bishops of the Catholick Church by authority of a generall Councell. The second is that, if any new question did arise in which the determination of a Councell were not to be found, that then we ought to have recourse to the sayings of the holy fathers, but yet of these only who in their time and place, were approved masters, being such as lived and dyed in the unity of the communion and faith: And whatsoever we knew that they beleeved and taught with one mind and content, to judge and take that without all scruple to be the true and Catholick Religion of the Church.

And least any man might think that we saied this rather of presumption then of any authority of the Church, we gave an example of the holy councel, holden almost three

years hithence at *Ephesus* a City in *Asia* in the time of the right honourable Consuls *Bassus* and *Antiochus*, in which disputation was had of constituting and setting down rules of faith, and least there might by chance some prophane Novelty creep in, as happened at that pestilent meeting in *Arminium*, this was required and thought the most Catholick, holy, and best course to be taken, by the judgment of all the Bishops there present, which were almost two hundred in number, that the opinions of those Fathers should be brought forth, of whom it was certaine that some of them had been Martyrs, divers Confessours & all to have lived and died Catholick Priests, that by their authority, consent and verdict, the old religion might be rightly and solemnly confirmed, and blasphemous prophane novelties condemned; which being

so done worthily and justly, *Nestorius* was judged to have taught contrary to the old Catholick religion, and blessed *Cyrill* to have maintained holy and sacred antiquity. And to the end nothing might be wanting which procureth credit, we put down also the names and number of these Fathers (although not remembring their order) according to whose consent and uniform doctrine both the texts of holy scripture were expounded, and the rule of Gods word stablished. Neither will it here be superfluous for memory sake to repeat them all once again. These then be the names of them whose works were cited in that Councell either as judges or else witnesses. S. *Peter Bishop* of *Alexandria*, a most excellent Doctour and blessed Martyr. S. *Athanasius* Bishop of the same sea, a most faithfull

teacher and famous Confessour. S. *Theophilus* Bishop also of the same City, a notable man for faith, life, and learning, next after whom succeeded venerable *Cyrill*, who at this present doth honour the Church of *Alexandria*. And that no man happily should suspect that this was the doctrine of one City, or of one Province: to the former there were adjoyned those two lights of *Cappadocia*, Saint *Gregory* Bishop, and Confessour of *Nazianzene*, & S. *Basil* Bishop and Confessour of *Cæsarea*, and also another Saint *Gregory Nyssen* worthy for his merit of faith, conversation, integrity, and wisdom of such a brother as *Basil* was. And for proof that not onely the Greek & East Church, but also the Latine, and West, were alwayes of the same opinion, the letters of Saint *Felix* Martyr, and Saint *Julio*, both Bishops of *Rome*, which they

they wrote unto certaine men, were there read. And that not onely the head of the world, but also the other parts should give testimony in that judgement: From the South they had blessed S. *Cyprian*, from the North S. *Ambrose* Bishop of *Millan*. These then be the holy Fathers, agreeing with that sacred number of the ten Commandements, which were alleadged in the Councell of *Ephesus*, as Masters, Councellours, Witnesses, and Judges; whose doctrine the blessed *Synod* holding, following whose counsell, beleeving whose testimony, obeying whose judgement, without spite, without presumption & without favour, pronounced, and gave sentence concerning the rules of faith. And albeit a farre greater number of Fathers might have been set down, yet was it not necessary, because it was not requisite

that time should be spent with multitude of witnesses: and further, no man doubted but that those ten did little differ in opinion from all the rest of their fellow Bishops. After all this we set down the worthy sentence of *Cyrill*, which is to be found in the Ecclesiasticall acts of that Councell. For when the Epistle of S. *Capreolus* Bishop of *Carthage* was read, who intended nothing else, nothing else desired, but that novelty might be overthrown, and antiquity defended, Bishop *Cyril* spake and gave his definition in this sort: for I have thought good not to omit it here: these then be his words in the end of the acts of that Councell. *And this epistle* (quoth he) *of the venerable and religious man Capreolus Bishop of Carthage, shall be adjoyned to the faith of the Councels acts, whose opinion is plain and perspicuous, for*

to desireth that the doctrine of the old faith may be confirmed, and new opinions superstitiously invented, and impiously spread abroad, may be reproved and condemned. To which all the Bishops with one consent cried out: This we speake all, this we teach all, this we desire all. What I beseech you said they all, what desired they all? surely nothing else but that that which was of old time delivered, might be still retained, and that which was newlie invented, might speedilie be rejected. After that wee had admired, and highly commended the great humilitie and holinesse of that Councell, in which were so many Bishops, almost the greater part of whom were *Metropolitans*, of such erudition, of such learning, that they were almost all sufficient to have disputed of matters of faith; Which great assemblie and meeting together although it might

in some mans opinion have imboldened them to presume and determine somewhat of themselves, yet they delivered nothing, presumed nothing, arrogated nothing to themselves; but above all things, they were very carefull not to leave any thing to posterity, which before they had not received of their fore-fathers, not thinking it sufficient to dispose well of the businesse then present, but also to leave an example to their posterity, how they in like manner should reverence the Religion of sacred Antiquity, and utterly condemn the inventions of profane Noveltie; We inveighed also against the wicked presumption of *Nestorius*: who boasted, that he was the first and the onely man which understood the Scriptures, and that all

all others which before his daies preached and taught, all that interpreted and expounded the word of God, were ignorant and unskilfull, that is, all Priests, all Confessours and Martyrs, of whom some had expounded Gods law, others allowed and believed them; to conclude he maintained that the Church both now did erre, and alwayes had erred, because as he thought, it had and did follow unlearned and erroneous Doctours. All which, albeit they were abundantly sufficient for the overthrow and extinguishing of all profane novelties: Yet least that ought should in such plenty of proofs be wanting, we added for a conclusion, a double authority of the Sea Apostolick, the one of holy *Pope Xistus*, which venerable father now honoureth the Church of Rome, the other of Pope *Celestinus* of blessed memory his predecessour,

which I have thought good also here to set down. Pope *Xistus* then in his Epistle which he wrote to the Bishop of *Antioch* touching the cause of *Nestorius*, saith thus. *Therefore* (quoth he) *because* the Apostle saith, *the faith is one, that which evidently hath obtained to be so called, let us beleeve, and such things as are to be holden let us beleeve.* Afterward he prolecuteth and explicateth what those things be, which are to be beleeved, what they be which are to be kept saying thus: *Nothing* (quoth he) *is further lawfull for Novelty, because it is convenient that nothing be added to Antiquity. The faith and belief of our forefathers is clear and perspicuous, let it not be troubled nor defiled with any permixtion of dirt or mire.* Apostolically spoken in commendation of our forefathers faith, to compare it to light

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and perspicuity, and in likening novell prophanes to the admixtion of filth and mire. *Pope Celestinus* likewise is of the same opinion, for in his Epistle which he sent to the Priests of *France*, wherein he reprehendeth their dissimulation, in that by their silence they left the old faith destitute, and suffered profane Novelties to spring up, thus he writeth: *Worthily* (quoth he) *the cause doth touch us, if with silence we foster errour; therfore let such men be corrected let them have no liberty to speake at their pleasure.* Some happily may doubt who they be, whom he forbideth to have their liberty in speaking, whether the preachers of antiquity, or the inventours of novelties: Let him speak, and discharge the Reader of this doubt, for it followeth: *Let Novelty cease* (quoth he) *if the matter be so*: that is, if that be true which

divers

divers accuse unto me your Cities and Provinces, that through your pernicious dissimulation you cause them to yield unto certain new doctrine: *Therfore* (quoth he) *if the matter be so, let Novelty cease to molest Antiquity.* This then was the blessed opinion of holy *Celestinus*, not that Antiquity should cease to overthrow Novelty, but rather that Novelty should give over to trouble Antiquity. Which Apostolick and Catholick decrees whosoever resists, first of necessity he must proudly contemn the memory of S. *Celestinus*, who defined that novelty should give over to provoke antiquity. Again he must jest and scoff at the decree of holy *Xistus*, whose judgement is, that nothing is lawfull for novelty, because it is not convenient that ought be added to antiquity. Again he must contemn the determination of blessed *Cyrill*,

Who

who highly commended the zeal of venerable *Capreolus*, in that he desired, that the old Articles of Faith should be confirmed, and new inventions utterly condemned. Likewise he must reject the *Councell* of *Ephesus*, that is, the judgement almost of all the holy Bishops of the East, who inspired by God, would not decree that posterity should beleeve ought, but that which the sacred Antiquity of our Forefathers agreeing together in Christ had holden and beleeved, who with their uniform allowing and acclamation testified, that they all decreed, all wished, all gave judgement, that as all Hereticks almost before *Nestorius* contemning antiquity and defending Novelty were condemned: so likewise *Nestorius* himself the Authour of Novelty and impugner of Antiquity should be condemned. Whose sacred

cred consent and agreement proceeding from Gods goodnesse if any dislike, what remaineth but that he maintain that *Nestorius* his prophane opinion was unjustly condemned? Finally he must also reject and contemn the universall Church of Christ, and her masters the Apostles and Prophets, and especially the doctrine of S. PAUL, as dregs and drosse. The universall Church, because she hath alwayes religiously kept and maintained that faith which was once delivered; S. PAUL, because he hath thus written, *O Timothy, keep the depositum, avoiding prophane Novelties of voyces*: And again, *if any preach unto you otherwise, then you have received, he accursed.* Seeing that if neither the Apostle his definition, nor the Ecclesiasticall Canons ought to be violated, by which according to the sacred consent of universality

versality and antiquity, alwayes all hereticks, and lastly *Pelagius*, *Celestinus*, and *Nestorius* were justly & deservedly condemned; surely necessary it is that hereafter all Catholicks which desire to shew themselves true children of their mother the Church, adhere, joyn, and stick close unto the holy faith of their holy Fathers, detesting and abhorring, pursuing and opposing the profane novelties of all profane miscreants whatsoever. This almost is the summe of that which in these two *Commonitory* Books we have more amply discoursed of, and now after the manner of recapitulation in fewer words gathered together, that my memory, for helping whereof I have wrote this Treatise, may both with daily admonition be repaired, and yet not overlaid with any tedious prolixity.

FINIS.

THE VERITY OF Christian Faith.

Written by *Hierome Savanorola* of Ferrara.



LONDON,
Printed by *R. Daniel*, 1651.

THE
VERITY
OF THE
Christian Faith.

LONDON,

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THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSSE, OR, Of the Verity OF FAITH.

By *Hierome Savanocola* of *Ferrara*.



LONDON,
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OR,
Of the Verity
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By Hieronie Savonarola, of Ferr.

LONDON,
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The Preface.

HAving as farre forth as I judged sufficient for my present purpose treated in the precedent Book those things, which are of themselves obvious to naturall reason, it remains now that I discusse those also which are above the sphere of our Nature, that I may thereby plainly shew the Christian Faith to be most true not onely by natural motives, but out of the very actions of our blessed Saviour Christ Jesus; and because these things before our eyes do more enforce our understanding to assent, then things which are past; for it is harder to deny what we plainly see before our eyes, then that which we receive at trust by Tradi-

tions. I shall lay the first grounds of my proofs in those things which are unquestionable unto all, as being daily seen practised in the Church of Christ, and are most apparant to sense it self. I do not speak of the vices of evill Christians, who as such are sequestred rather, and cut off from the communication and mysticall Union of the Church, but of those good members of it, which not onely bear and professe the name of Christians but also prove themselves to be such by their virtuous lives and actions. This done, I shall produce reasons grounded in those actions of Christ which are most generally received and allowed of by all, so that the latter shall manifestly confirm the former; the things present, those which are past. But because the chief effect at which the institution of the Church aims, is Justice, and an irreprehensible and unspotted life: our

Saviour

Saviour saying (speaking of the members of his Church) Ego veni ut vitam habeant & abundantiùs habeant: *To this end I came that they may live, and that they live more abundantly. First therefore I shall in due order prove the truth of the Christian Faith, by reasons truly grounded in the virtuous lives of good Christians. Secondly, in the causes of such a life: and lastly in the effects of the same life, wherein I shall comprise all those things which are daily exercised in the Church Militant of Christ.*

The triumph of the Crosse, or, of the verity of Faith.

Chap. I.

That there is a true Religion.

IT is altogether necessary that every one acknowledge, that in the world there is a true Religion: By Religion we understand a due Worship exhibited unto Almighty God, as he is the universall fountain, source, and moderatour of all things: For every effect doth exhibite a certain worship to its cause whilst converting its self unto it, and as it were invocating it with a kind of subjection,

ction, it strives to imitate and make it self like unto it, which expresses nothing else but a certain return of honour from the effect to its cause, that it may be more and more perfected by it. Wherefore Almighty God being the universall Cause of all things, of whom heaven and earth and all that hath goodnesse in it, have their whole being and dependance: most clear it is that in man there ought to be an ingrafted and naturall instinct to convert it self to God, and to invoke and subject himself unto him, to do his uttermost to become like unto him, and to be perfected by him, which is nothing else then to exhibite worship unto him. Now if there be such a naturall inclination in the rationall nature of man to worship his Creatour, and that this inclination cannot be superfluous, or in vain, we must of force conclude, that

there is a true Religion to be found amongst men.

Moreover, seeing that man is naturally inclined to the divine Worship, (as every effect is to its cause) and that he is rationall, as not being necessitated to any thing, as other brute and irrationall things are, which are naturally carried away by their appetites; but having a true dominion over his actions, he freely disposes of them as he list. Now if all men (as naturall reason is oftentimes very defective) should fall into so generall and gross an errour, that there should be no true and divine Worship found amongst them, it would follow that they would be so deprived of the divine Providence, that there would appear no Divine care exercised towards them in the thing which is of all others most necessary and naturall unto them; seeing that this true divine Worship is that, by

which man is to arrive to the fruition of his last end. But this I have elsewhere plainly refuted.

I adde that every countrey and nation, in every age both past and present, having been (though in diverse wayes) addicted unto the divine Worship; it must necessarily follow that this truth is wholly ingrafted and naturall unto man; for that is naturall (as I have elsewhere shewen) which agrees unto all, and at all times, wherefore if there should be no true divine Worship found, this natural inclination would be wholly frustrate, seeing it were not able to arrive unto the end which it was ordained for: whence it would follow that Almighty God executed his Providence more towards unreasonable creatures then towards man.

Lastly, seeing that every cause infuses its perfection and goodnesse, as much as possible it may, into its effect,

fect, intending by all means to attract it, and make it as farre as it hath capacity like unto it self; Almighty God being superlatively good, and the first origin of all things, hath questionlesse a speciall care of the perfection of man, for whose sake and use, he made all other inferiour creatures: wherefore, the true perfection of man principally consisting in the subjecting himself unto God, and in the Divine veneration in the which Religion doth chiefly consist, it follows that there is a true Religion to be found in the world.

CHAP. II.

There are two sorts of Divine Worship.

MAn having a capacity to exhibite veneration unto Almighty God

God two wayes, corporally and spiritually, we ought to distinguish two sorts of Divine Worship in him, to wit, interiour and exteriour: interiour is that which we perform by the acts of our understanding and will: exteriour is that which we exhibite by a personall reverence, externall ceremonies, and corporall sacrifices. Now as all matters are naturally made and ordained for their forms, so questionlesse the externall Worship hath a due subordination to the interiour.

This interiour Divine Worship is nothing else but a righteousnesse and perfection of the interiour man, by the which God is most honoured, which I prove in this manner. Every cause receives most honour from the perfection of its more principall effects, whence artizans become famous by the excellence of their master-pieces; but there is no visible effect more

noble

noble then man, who, the more excellent he becomes in perfection, the more is the Divine Honour increased. Now he is so much the more perfect, by how much his life is more holy, for sanctity is the perfection of the interiour man, by which even the whole man is perfected; and therefore the chief honour that man does Almighty God, is by a virtuous, holy, and perfect life, and in this manner, the true and entire worship of Almighty God is the life of an upright and virtuous man becoming so by his actions, as they have a reference unto his Creatour.

We do not worship Almighty God meerly and precisely for himself, but also that we may obtain from him that supreme blisse for which man is created; wherefore, the true Religion is the means and disposition for the gaining of this supreme felicity of man, as we see naturall

turall causes exact the congruous dispositions of that subject or matter into which they produce their effects, seeing therefore it is manifest that man is much more perfectly disposed for the obtaining his chief blisse by a virtuous life, then by sacrifices and exteriour Ceremonies; it is no lesse certain that the true Religion consists in the righteousnesse of life.

Moreover, Almighty God not being a body but a pure act, man becomes more like him by the purity of his interiour part, then by any exteriour integrity, and therefore God is more perfectly worshipped by the spirit, then by any functions of the body; for Almighty God being a Spirit, it behoves those that worship him, to adore him in spirit and verity.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That there is no better life then that of Christians.

THere is no life more perfect and holy then the life of Christians, for if we take a view of all living creatures, we shall find in the lowest degree of life those which onely enjoy vegetation or growth, as plants, thence we raise us unto the animall or sensitive life, which degree of life admits a latitude of divers degrees of sensitive perfection, whereof that degree is more perfect which enjoyes the perfect degree of sensations. Now, the intellectuall life farre exceeding that which is onely vegetive and sensible, we easily conclude that the life of beasts is farre inferiour to the life of man, in which also we distinguish divers

divers degrees of actuall perfection, though not of essentiall, for we preferre those that follow the light and *dictamen* of reason, before those who swerving from it and neglecting reason, give the full scope and rains to sense. The reason is clear, because the more they neglect reason, and addict themselves to sensuall pleasure, the lesse they participate the life of man, and become more like unto beasts; but those who are guided by reason and do suppresse the brute and inferiour part, do lead the life of man and not of beasts; there being therefore in man a combination of these two degrees of the rationall and brute life, and the rationall being farre more excellent of the two, it must needs follow that that man is more perfect who addicts himself to a rationall life, then he who gives himself over to the life of brutes, now amongst those who

addict

addict themselves unto an intellectuall life, there is a great difference; for the soul of man becomes much more perfect by the knowledge and love of the truth of spirituall things then of corporall, especially as they are exercised about the divine Perfections: hence it is that the life and powers of the soul of man become more perfect, the more it refrains from corporall objects, and imployes it self in the contemplation and love of spirituall things, especially of the divine Perfections. Now a Christian life aims chiefly at this, that neglecting all created objects whether spirituall or corporall, it wholly imployes it self in the contemplation and love of Almighty God, so that it becomes in a manner by an intellectuall and affectionate union one and the Spirit with its divine Object; wherefore, it being a thing impossible to find a life more perfect then

then that by which a man is united with his first cause, and his last end, it appears clearly that there can be no life more perfect then that of a Christian.

Moreover, the righteous life of man, as he is man (as I have said before) receives its value from the degree of reason which it exercises; wherefore, the more rationall it is, the greater is its worth and value: Therefore, seeing that those which are true Christians are unwilling to do any thing at all against reason, it must needs follow that their life farre excells the life of other Sects and Religions.

The virtuous life of man hath a chief regard unto that for which it was created, to wit, the contemplation of the said perfections, for which is required a most pure serenity of mind; for if a mind be subject to humane and sensuall passions,

it

it will be altogether unfit for so sublime and elevated an object; But there is no life to be found which more undresses the interiour powers of the soul of man, then that of Christians, which spends its whole endeavours in uniting it self onely with its Creatour: Therefore, there is none which surpasses it in true dignity and excellency.

Chap. IV.

There cannot be imagined the last end of any life better then that of Christians.

TO the end I may make it appear that there is no life to be compared with that of Christians, we must know that there are two changes principally required to a virtuous life, to wit, a perfect end, and proportionable means for attaining

taining to that end. First, I will shew that there is no end of the life of man, so consonant to reason, as that which Christians aim at; next I shall make appear that the means which Christians are to put in execution for the gaining their end, are the most accomplished and excellent of all others.

And as for the end, it will easily appear, if we daily consider that there are two sorts of ends of the life of man; the end *cujus*, or, of which, and the end *quo*, or, by which: that is the thing it self which we seek, and the means by which we enjoy the same. Nothing questionlesse is so excellent as Almighty God; But God is the end of the life of Christians, for whose sake, and unto whom they addresse all their actions: This end therefore of theirs admits no colour of question. Their faith also aspires unto the clear vision

and

and fruition of Almighty God, not by the mediation of creatures, but immediately by his divine Essence. Now man by his clear intuition and fruition becoming united unto Almighty God, arrives by the same unto his most consummate and supreme perfection, beyond which there remains not the least object of any rationall desire; Almighty God being that goodnesse which plenarily satiates all the appetites of the soul of man.

It remains now that I shew by most pregnant and convincing reasons, that the last blisse and felicity of man consists in the clear intuition of the Divine perfections, for I have now proved that it cannot be attained unto in this life; and if we place it in the contemplation of Almighty God, this not being had here, it is to be expected in the next life, where if it shall consist in the intel-

intellectuall possessing of the first verity not known by its own proper species or immediate objective influence, but by the intervention of effects or other representatives there will arise many difficulties; for first it will not appear how mans intellectuall appetite will be fully satiated and wholly acquiesce in such a mediate contemplation, for if the soul of man in the state of separation from the body hath knowledge not onely of materiall objects, but of spirituall also, and immateriall substances; either it hath this knowledge perfectly or imperfectly; if imperfectly? by their intervention man cannot arrive unto the perfect knowledge of God, and all things in the state of imperfection have a capacity and appetite of their respective perfection (to the matter seeks its form, and that which is foul to become beautifull) certainly the soul

of

of man as unsatisfied by such an imperfect knowledge of its object, cannot be at quiet, which also may be seen in the endeavours of men, whose understanding not content with a confused and perfect knowledge of things, strives by all labour and industry to arrive unto the perfect knowledge of them: If with a perfect knowledge they penetrate the effects, they are presently inflamed with a desire to know their causes, for man naturally desires true knowledge which consists in the knowing the causes of things. That which is naturall cannot be taken from nature, and as naturall motion grows more impetuous and swift in the end, then it was in its biginning; so mans understanding, the more perfectly it hath penetrated the effects, the more earnestly doth it seek to know the causes of them; therefore, I do not see how the natural

appetite

appetite of mans understanding may be satisfied without the clear sight of Almighty God, which also is confirmed by experience, that the capacity of mans mind is not satisfied by any limitted object, beyond which it alwayes apprehends somewhat to remain unknown, whence it is that if any limitted dimension or number be presupposed, there remains alwayes a faculty of our understanding to add somewhat further and further without end, and this is the nature of that infinity which the Mathematicians in their lines and numbers call the infinity of encrease or augment. Therefore all created substances being finite and limitted, our understanding never rests satiated untill it behold the increated substance of Almighty God, which alone as being a pure act admits no bounds or circumscription. It is therefore unreasonable to prefix any

other

ther end of the life of man, then that which our faith hath established (to wit) the clear vision of the divine Essence. For it is manifest to all, that Almighty God is the last object in which the soul of man doth finally acquiesce. All naturall motion tends to some last end or centre whither being arrived, it ceases. Now there being no created substance in which the heart of man can fix its finall affection, we may conclude, that it onely rests then when he shall behold face to face Almighty God, then whom there being nothing greater, there can be nothing wanting in him to the full satiety of man; nor shall he further affect inferiour objects, because he shall make no account of them. For there is no proportion between things limited and that which is infinite; as also because there is no perfection in any effect, which is not more per-

fectly and eminently contained in the first cause, and consequently there will be no further desire of any thing, because our understanding will be most compleatly perfected, as fully possessing its supreme and last object, in the which it will most easily behold those other inferiour things, towards which it is naturally inclined; and this is one difference between the understanding and senses, for the senses in the fruition of their principall object are exhausted and corrupted; but the understanding is thereby exceedingly perfected.

But here we must observe, Almighty God being infinite, and above the sphere of all created substances, that our understanding by its own proper forces, virtue, and energy cannot raise it self so high as to behold the divine Essence; but there is necessary a supernaturall disposition or quality called by Divines the

the light of glory, which God infuses in the next life into the souls which are free from all guilt of sinne or pain, that he may thereby make them capable and fit for this beatificall vision. For Almighty God alwayes supplies necessities, nor can there be any thing elevated above its own proper sphere, unlesse it be assisted by some superiour virtue; now the vigour alone of the most intense naturall light of our understanding, is no way sufficient to produce the clear vision of Almighty God, because the excellence of the object precisely does not elevate naturall power to an act of another kind, or of a superiour nature, such as is the beatificall vision in regard of a created understanding, which therefore ought to be supplied with some supernaturall disposition or quality, which we call the light of Glory. Whence it appears, what a true and

rationall judgement our Fa[illegible] frames of the end of humane l[illegible] and how easily it dissolves the di[illegible] culties of controversie, in the whi[illegible] those of other opinions find them[illegible] selves wholly intangled, as in so ma[illegible] ny Labyrinths. Where whatsoeve[illegible] we say either of the end *cujus*, or the end *quo*, there can be found none so good and rationall, no nor even imagined, as that which Christians professe and teach.

Chap. V.

There can be no better means to attain unto eternall blisse, then a Christian life.

BEing now to treat of the means by which we are to arrive to the fore-mentioned ends, I shall make it appear that there is none which may rationally be compared with those, which are approved by the Christian

Christian Faith; for Almighty God doing nothing in vain, I suppose that no man can doubt, but man is to arrive unto his last end, which is eternall beatitude, by some means or other; for that thing questionlesse would be altogether vain and to no purpose which could not arrive unto the end for which it was ordained, as for example, the power of motion in man would be in vain, had he no limbs, muscles, and joynts to perform it, seeing therefore that man naturally thirsts after eternall blisse, if the means of attaining it should be taken away, certainly his desire of it would be altogether frustrate: Therefore there must be some means found, by which man is to arrive to this clear vision of God, which is his end. This means Christians call the purity of heart, and the divine Grace supernaturally infused into our souls, which makes them per-

fect, and enables them to operate and profit in all sorts of virtues.

No man can deny but that the purity of heart is the means to raise our selves to the contemplation of the first Verity. I call the means that, which bears a proportion with the gaining the ends, and to the clear knowledge of God, there is exacted a great rapt or extasie, he being the most supreme object of our understanding, and elevated farre above all things which are pervious to the senses. Wherefore there is necessary a most exquisite purity of mind, that is a sovereign elevation of the soul from the love and affection of visible and corporall things to the intense love of invisible and spirituall objects; for that we call pure, which hath no mixture in it of any thing which is of an inferiour nature and quality: Now our understanding being separated from

from all corporall organs, and our soul being a spirituall and rationall substance, the more it abstracts and raises it self from corporall and materiall things, and unites it self with Divine objects, the more pure it becomes. Whatever Philosophers may have established and taught of the purity of heart, of virtues, and of morall integrity is not onely practised and taught by the Christian Religion, but by the same Religion there are found out new wayes and documents for the purifying our hearts with greater sanctity. For that purity of heart, which is found out and gained by the force of nature, is a mean no way proportionable with the end which we have prefixed for Christians; for whatever exceeds the forces of any nature cannot be gained without the assistance of another superiour nature, even as water or any ponderous bo-

dy is not raiſed of it ſelf, but by the motion of another; but to ſee the divine Subſtance (as I have ſaid in the precedent Chapter) is above the ſphere of a created nature, and therefore every intellectuall nature operating according to its capacity, it muſt needs follow, that a created underſtanding cannot purifie and undregge it ſelf ſufficiently, unleſſe it be elevated by a ſuperiour aſſiſtance, and therefore the morall integrity and righteouſneſſe of which Philoſophers have treated, bears not a ſufficient proportion with the laſt end and ſupreme bliſſe of man. Hence it is that Chriſtians with great reaſon do attribute this proportion to Grace, and other virtues ſupernaturally infuſed by Almighty God, who is wanting to none in the requiſits neceſſary for the directing them, how with a moſt pure intention they may arrive unto their wiſhed

wished end. To prove which more at large is not for my present intended brevity, having manifestly demonstrated in my Treatise *Of the simplicity of a Christian life*, that it is not derived from a naturall love or imagination, or from the light of naturall reason alone, or from any celestiall influence, or from any other spirituall creature, but from the graces and supernaturall gifts which Almighty God infuses into our souls. Wherefore, not to repeat the same thing oftentimes, those that are willing may read that Treatise, and see how Christian life is a most perfect mean for the gaining the end of mans life, whence it must needs follow that there is no other life so good and absolutely perfect as that of Christians.

Chap. VI.

By Christian Religion, man most assuredly obtains eternall blisse.

IF it be necessary (as I have proved it is) that amongst men there be some true Religion, which consists in the righteousnesse of life, the Christian Religion excelling others in this, must of force be the true Religion, by the which Almighty God is both exteriourly and interiourly most duly worshipped. For the exteriour doth either practise, or is an expression of the interiour; so that if the interiour be true, it is manifest that the exteriour is either a practicall execution or expression of the same verity, whilst corresponding to the interiour, it is rightly termed a true exteriour worship, of which I shall hereafter treat more at large. We therefore worshipping Almighty

ty God chiefly to exhibite a true honour unto him, and next for the obtaining our own true beatitude, it must follow that God is truly worshipped by Christians, and that Christians by so doing aim at their own blisse, which finally they are capable on; and consequently those which do persevere unto the end in a true virtuous and Christian life, may safely promise unto themselves eternall blisse. Moreover, having plainly heretofore demonstrated a divine Providence over humane affairs, to which Providence it appertains to direct things to their proper ends by proportionable means, and there are no means which bear greater proportion with eternall blisse then those of a Christian life; we may not doubt but whoever shall have led a Christian life, (the Worship of Christian Religion being the most perfect) shall be finally

nally elevated to that eternall bliſſe.

Further, if it be blaſphemy to impeach the divine Goodneſſe of Injuſtice, Chriſtians who obſerve this law cannot be fruſtrate of their bliſſe; for Almighty God being the authour or the firſt mover of all things to their proper ends, either he will promote ſome mortals to their beatitude, or none; if none, mans creation would be vain, and (as I have heretofore made appear) many abſurdities would follow: if ſome, then will he moſt juſtly preferre Chriſtians whom we know to be the moſt virtuous of all men.

For if Chriſtians ſhining before others in Piety and Religion become deſtitute of their finall bliſſe, no man certainly muſt look for it becauſe if that which appears greater have no being at all, what may be expected of that which appears leſſe?

As

As for Christians, certainly they appear to have a greater proportion with their blisse then others, because (as I have proved) they have lesser impediments, and are more disposed unto it; and therefore is the Christian Faith and Religion to be preferred before all others. And truly, if Christians living according to the prescript of their Religion become frustrate of their expected blisse, we must conclude that there is no such thing, but a meer fable, a fiction, a chymera; for in naturall causes we see that they produce their severall forms and effects, if they be not hindred, and the matter subjected have in it congruous dispositions, and shall the end and last form of a virtuous life, which is eternall blisse, to which no life is better disposed then that of Christianity, be denied, to that which is most habill and disposed? Which if it be so, then truly

there

there is no finall felicity of man, because (as I have shown) there is no other form of finall blisse, and consequently there is no last end of the life of man. Since therefore it would follow (the end being the measure, or rule of the means by which the end is gained) that man would be the most miserable of all living creatures, and void of all order, would be subject to all casualty, and destitute of all providence, which is the greatest of all absurdities, I conclude therefore (that which I intended) that a Christian life by true Religion, is a most safe and certain way to eternall blisse.

Chap. VII.

The truth of Christian Faith is proved by being the cause of a virtuous life.

HAving proved the Verity of Christian Religion by Arguments

ments grounded in the virtuous life of Christians, now I intend to confirm the same out of the causes of the same life. The principall causes of this life is the Faith of our Saviour Christ Jesus crucified, informed with Charity, that is, which works by love: the Scripture teaching us, *Justitia Dei per fidem Jesu Christi in omnes & super omnes qui credunt in eum*: that is, The Justice of God is by the Faith of Jesus Christ for all and over all which believe in him: and without Faith it is impossible to please God. This Faith of Christ informed, is that by which we beleeve that Christ crucified is true God, and true man, the Son of God identified in nature with the Father and the holy Ghost, but distinguished in person, whom we love above all things. Faith therefore altogether with the love of Christ is the cause of the forementioned life.

That

That it is so, daily experience teaches us, for that which is manifest cannot be denied, and of this we have a most palpable experience, because we see Christians make so much progresse in the righteousnesse of life, as they profit in the Faith of Christ; and on the contrary: for between these two sorts is such a strict connexion, as they inferre a mutuall consequence; and on the contrary, the defect of one inferres the losse of the other; for no sooner grows a Christian vitious of life, but the form of his Faith, which is Charity towards God vanishes, and on the contrary. If therefore we perceive in the life of man such an effect, which men have learned by their own and others experience to have constantly endured from the coming of our Saviour even unto these present times, and that all Christians do averre and teach the same,

why

why should we not out of admiration of so important a matter play the Philosophers, enquiring and searching into the causes of it, even as the Philosophers having perceived the effects of naturall things, and being ignorant of their causes began first to admire, and then by discourse to search into the causes of them?

First, therefore there is no effect perfecter then its principall, or totall cause, of whom its perfection hath its dependance; if therefore the righteousnesse and verity of a Christian life, which of all sorts of life is the most excellent, hath its dependance of the Faith of Christ, it is not possible, but that Faith must be true; but if it be true, it follows that Christ is true God, and that his Religion is true, which the Christians professe.

It is no lesse impossible that that which

which is good, and true, hath its substantial dependance of that which is evill and false; for evill, as it is evill false, as it is false, is a certain nothing or a negation of the positive perfections of goodnesse and verity; now if the Faith of Christ should be false, and the love of him vitious, certainly the perfection of a Christian life which is known to be so good, could not substantially depend on that Faith and love which are evill, as it is clear.

Further, if the Faith of Christ were false, it would be the greatest of all errours; for to affirm a man crucified to be true God, if it were not true, were an extreme madnesse and folly; how could the life of Christians therefore, it being most perfect, (as I have proved) proceed from so great an errour? Seeing that the institution of a well-ordered life is derived from, and grounded

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in the framing a right conceit and understanding of it; and all errour in affection and morall actions proceed from its injustice, and difformity with the rule of equity.

Moreover, the better any nature or subject is disposed, the more is it facilitated for the receiving a more perfect form; but the form and perfection of our understanding is verity, and the disposition for the receiving of verity is a purity and sincerity of heart, and therefore the more a man hath his mind undrossed from the affection of creatures, the more it is prepared for the embracing verity, and rejecting that which is false; but I have proved, that there is no disposition more undrossed and purified, then that of a Christian life; and therefore if the Christian Faith were erroneous, none would more easily discern the deceit, then Christians. But we behold the clean contrary:

contrary: for as they daily arrive to a more elevated degree of ſanctity, the more conſtantly and undoubtedly they aſſever its integrity; and as they grow more grounded in their Faith, their lives alſo increaſe in perfection, whence it undoubtedly follows, that their Faith is true.

Almighty God, as he is the firſt mover, and firſt cauſe of all things, doth no leſſe produce and cauſe motions in ſpirituall things then he doth in materiall and corporall, and conſequently cauſes motions in our underſtanding and will; and no man muſt doubt, but he affords the light of verity at leaſt of things neceſſary to the ſalvation of reaſonable creatures, more clearly to them who by their concurrence and ſanctimony of life become better diſpoſed for it. Now if virtuous and ſincere Chriſtians were erroneous in their Faith, they ſhould have no prerogative before

fore the vitious and sinfull, but as misled and blinded with many enormious deceits and errours would be given over to a reprobate sense, which is quite contrary to the goodnesse and present Providence of Almighty God.

The end is the cause of the means which are ordained for the gaining it; wherefore, those that erre in the end must needs go astray in the election of the means to attain it: for if the end in practicall things is as the principle and cause in things which are speculative, seeing therefore that Christians do not erre in the means which serve for the gaining the end, (to wit) in the virtue of their lives, but do farre excell all others, it follows they erre not in the end: But all assuredly confesse Christ to be their end; for they onely strive to become most like unto him, and with all their endeavours aim

aim to enjoy him; therefore we must conclude that which they most constantly professe, that Christ crucified is true God.

The proceedings of Almighty God are alwayes ordinate, ordering things by his divine Wildome, so as that he governs the inferiour things by the superiour; and hence he subordinates nobler effects to nobler causes, for all causes must be perfecter then their effects; now in humane affairs there is no nobler effect then a Christian life, which consequently must proceed from the most noble cause; now we see this wholly to flow from Christ, whom therefore we must acknowledge to be the most perfect of all causes.

Secundary causes are the instruments of the primary or the first cause, a Christian life therefore proceeding from Christ as from his cause, we must confesse that Christ being

being a man crucified is the instrument of producing this excellent effect of Christian perfection; now if Christ were not also God as he taught himself to be, there could be no man more wicked and execrable, and by this means Almighty God would use a most detestable instrument for the production of a virtuous life, which is extremely absurd.

The cause being the measure of the effect, by how much the perfection of the effect approaches nearer to the perfection of the cause, and becomes more like unto it, so much is it nearer its compleat and full perfection; but we see the more like a man is to Christ Jesus in his life, the more holy he becomes, and in a manner Divine, which were not possible, unless he both were true God, and his Faith most intirely true.

We know causes by their effects,

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as we experience in medicines by their ſucceſſe; ſeeing therefore that Philoſophers leave behinde them unto poſterity the rules of a virtuous life, and yet very few of them have attained unto any conſiderable degree of perfection, notwithſtanding great endeavours done to that effect; nay, in the great abundance of the moſt excellent of them, none almoſt, without the direction of Chriſtian Faith, have been able to effect any thing; which yet we ſee in that ſhort time, and exactly to be brought to paſſe by Chriſtian Diſcipline in the congregation of the faithfull in every ſex and age: and the reaſon is, becauſe in deed there is no compariſon between Philoſophicall documents and the rules of Chriſtian life, neither for Morality nor Religion. For what is more admirable, then that a moſt lewd and wicked man (as we are taught by daily examples

of

of all ages) as soon as he hath truly converted himself unto Christ crucified, becomes a new man, of proud and envious, humble and courteous; of covetous and sordid, liberall and bountifull; of lewd and luxurious, becomes continent and chaste, and as it were, with the principles of his Faith sucks in the respective antidotes for his particular vices, and with a manifold interest recompences and repayes the debts of his former vices; which never any sect of Philosophers hath attained unto: whence it necessarily follows, that Christ is the principall or instrumentall cause of it, and a medicine which restores all morality and produces a most perfect life in his faithfull.

CHAP. VIII.

That Christian Doctrine containing the Grounds of Faith is from God.

THE reading, hearing, and contemplation of holy Scripture is the cause of Christian perfection, and the substance of our Religion; for the verity of Scripture is the object of Faith, and therefore the arguments of Faith are those which are drawn out of holy Scriptures.

We know that in the understanding of man there is no determinate knowledge of future contingencies, of which we can frame no acts nor science, which made the most famous and learned of all Philosophers conclude, that men could have no knowledge of future things subject to chance; and to have it was proper onely to Almighty God, who being eternall,

eternall, comprehends in his eternity all things, the which are clearly laid open to his understanding, and of the which men cannot arrive unto the knowledge unlesse they be revealed unto them by Almighty God: seeing therefore that the holy Scripture almost every where, but chiefly in the Old Testament, doth foretell future contingencies, which depend on mens free-will, not onely in generall terms, but most exactly intending unto particulars, and that not those of one, ten, a hundred, or a thousand years, but hath foretold those of two, three, and four thousand years; and not onely those which befell unto the Jews, and those which were to be done by Christ his Spouse the Church: but as it were foretold all the prosperities and adversities which should happen to almost all Nations: as, the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians,

Medes Greeks, Romans, and the rest; and that just as it was foretold it most exactly came to passe; we must necessarily confesse that the Scriptures came from God, and were not written by the industry and wit of men, and therefore those which as yet remain to be fulfilled, are to be held most infallible; as proceeding from the same Spirit who foretold those others, which have so admirably beyond all imagination been accomplished. And hence we clearly gather, that Almighty God hath a most speciall care of men, and exercises his divine Providence about humane affairs.

The foreseeing then of future contingencies appertaining onely to Almighty God, humane industry and sagacity cannot so order and dispose such combination of affairs, as the heroicall enterprizes and warlike exploits of famous men, but oftentimes

do

do beyond all expectation light on most unexpected and variable events. God onely therefore can determine these actions of men so that they may be signs of what is to follow in future ages; but we see how those things which are already brought to passe in the new Scripture, or shall hereafter follow, are deciphered and delineated under most proper types and figures in the Old Testament.

Nor can it rationally be said that those interpretations are vainly raised or feigned by Christians, or composed without ground, because in so great a variety of things and times, in so manifold a composition of words, and in so great a diversity of Authours and sacred Writers, there could not be so exact an uniformity of the Old Law with the New, unlesse some understanding and divine Providence had framed a correspon-

dence of things which were to happen in their due times: nor can it be said that it was done by chance, for there cannot be found the least thing which is dissonant, impertinent, or discomposed, but every thing with an equall tenour and most sweet harmony makes up the concord; so that that which is obscurely toucht in one place, in another is found manifest, so as the whole Scripture may seem to explicate it self; this if it be unknown to those which are ignorant of holy Scriptures, it is farre otherwise with those who have enriched their understandings with the treasures gathered out of the most sincere fountain of Verity: if therefore they desire to know the truth, let them with piety, humility and purity search into the same fountain of holy Scriptures, and questionlesse they will be of our opinion.

Wherefore Allegoricall Exposition

tion agrees onely to holy Scripture, because this alone is that which hath descended from Almighty God, as he exercised his all-seeing and celestiall Wisdome. I call an Allegory not the fabulous Interpretations Poets use, (and we also do expound Parables without an Allegory) nor a parabolicall and literall sense, which we use, when in a fable or parable, we do not intend to signifie that which is couched under the bare notion of the words, but onely that which is raised in our conceits by those words, and hath a further sense. But an Allegoricall sense we call that which contains three things: first, that without all fiction according to the proper signification of the words, the history both concerning the words, actions, and relations be plainly and sincerely recounted. Secondly, that there be some future thing signified by that thing which

is done at preſent. Thirdly, that thoſe things which are done, be ſo fitly diſpoſed and ordered, that when they are put in execution there appear in them an inſinuation of their future correlatives: whence it is manifeſt, that no created induſtry could ever couch ſuch a confirmation of things in this ſenſe but onely the divine Providence, which had an infallibility of all future contingencies.

Alſo the manner of ſpeech and context of holy Scripture is ſo ſingular, that it could not have been uſed by any the moſt excellent and skilfull of all Chriſtians, although they were moſt exerciſed in all kind of knowledge; for this manner of order and expreſſion was onely granted unto them, unto whom the holy Ghoſt vouchſafed to dictate and inſpire it, becauſe, although there interceded ſeverall diſtances of times between

between those Hagiographers or holy Writers, and also some of them used more elegance of writing; yet the substance of the expression was alwayes the same in all, which is a manifest sign that it was not Humane, but Divine.

The same is also approved by the effects, by which we gather the virtue of the cause; for (as I have already shewed both in this book, and in another of the simplicity of a Christian life) there is no nobler effect then a Christian life, which cannot proceed out of any inferiour and created cause, but onely from the free gift and liberall hand of Almighty God, seeing therefore that that Doctrine is the chief instrument of a Christian life in which the whole form of Christian Religion doth consist, it clearly appears, that the same, and even the manner of speech could not be Humane but Divine:

for experience teaches, that humane learning little avails mankind to a happy and blessed life, because before this light appeared to the world, it was wholly drowned in a dark night of vices and confusion; but after the rayes of Apostolicall Doctrine displayed themselves, and the sound of Evangelicall Preachers was heard, all those clouds and mists were dispersed, and the minds of men repleniſhed with those beams became resplendent with a most shining serenity of truth and virtue.

But in case that some should deny things so long since past, I will relate some domesticall examples of my own experience; for I have experienced that men have been by this divine Doctrine and the manner of it, more illuminated, delighted, and converted, then by any other; wherefore since the Preachers of our times neglecting this sacred Doctrine, have betaken

betaken themselves to Philosophical proportions and Rhetoricall ornaments, they have profited their Auditours very little, or nothing at all; whereas heretofore making use in their Sermons of a plain manner of speech, and content onely with the instruction and textuall frequence of holy Scripture, they have wonderfully inflam'd the minds of their hearers, who were so mutually delighted, that both in prosperity and adversity they did expresse their jubilee of mind, whence they were wonderfully stirr'd up to leade most blessed and virtuous lives.

I call God to witnesse that I have been oftentimes preaching unto the people, when I have made digressions to prove the profundity of the sacred Text unto the wits of this age; to the learneder sort by Philosophicall subtilties, and humane learning: I have plainly perceived out of a cer-

certain impatience and averſion of my Auditory very little attention in them; and this not onely of the more ignorant but even of the learned ſort: but as ſoon as I turned my ſelf again unto the Majeſty of ſacred Writ, either in the Interpretation of divers ſenſes, or in the relation of the hiſtories, I have ſeen an admirable attention in every one, all fixing their eyes upon me as if they had not been living creatures, but meer ſtatues.

Yea, I have experienced, that when omitting other queſtions I have inſiſted upon the Expoſition of ſacred Scripture my Auditory hath been ſo delighted, ſo illuſtrated, and verity appearing ſo touched to the quick by Divine influence, that they have immediately reform'd their lives, inſomuch that being delighted with no other reading, or hearing any other thing, renou..cing all ter-

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rene delights and appetites, and ſtirring themſelves up daily more and more, they have lived lives more divine then humane. And what I now affirm happen'd farre more frequently in thoſe Primitive Ages, when Chriſtian Religion was but newly planted.

This is that Doctrine which is more piercing then the two-edged ſword; which imbeliſhed the whole with virtues, which defaced the worſhip of the devils, and demoliſhed the profane Oracles of their Idols; this is that which hath diſperſed a world of errours, and hath been ſo fruitfull of all ſorts of wonders as I will hereafter declare.

Our underſtanding the more purified it is, the more capable it is of Verity; and hence it is that ſo many moſt excellent and elevated wits, have not onely extolled the praiſes of this Doctrine by their writings, but

but giving testimony of it by their preaching, life, and manners, have not doubted to spend their lives in its defence, which certainly they would no way have done, had they not seen almost a sensible and ocular evidence of its verity.

Further, truth gives testimony of truth, and falsity is the cause of division; other disciplines, arts, and faculties are not contrary, but as servants unto this; whence most learned and skilfull Doctours, who are most versed and exercised in all Sciences, do most constantly maintain, that there is no part of Philosophy which is repugnant or inconsistant, nay, which is not most fitly coherent with it; and therefore it is permitted all Christians to imploy their indeavours in the gaining of all Sciences, which would no way be tolerated, if it were detrimentary unto the Catholique Faith: there are onely

onely some few subject to superstition, which are forbidden, as that of Divination, being no lesse pernicious then unprofitable; which by the learnedst, even of the Philosophers, are hissed at, derided, and condemned, as not to be accounted amongst the Arts and Sciences. And if at any time there appear any contradiction between Philosophicall and Christian Principles, they are so apparantly reconciled by our Doctours, that it clearly appears, that all Philosophy is but the servant and hand-maid of the sacred Doctrine; for the easie dissolving of objections is the certain sign of Verity.

It is the nature of Verity, that the more it is impugned, the more (if it have a fit champion) is it brought to light, because our understanding having Verity for its object, is naturally inclined unto it, as to its proper perfection, and where the more

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it ſhines; with greater delight it is embraced; but then Verity appears moſt, when it is moſt ſharply impugned, becauſe in the very diſcuſſion and conflict of diſputation it manifeſts it ſelf. Seeing therefore that Chriſtian Doctrine having been ſo vehemently impugned by ſo many Philoſophers and Tyrants, hath alwayes remained invincible and victorious, which the infinite volumns of Chriſtians teſtifie, it is conſequent that its truth proceeded from Almighty God; otherwiſe in ſo many conflicts it had not ſo long remain'd unconquer'd.

Chap. IX.

Chriſtian Faith proved true out of their uſe of Prayer and Contemplation.

As Faith and the reading holy Scriptures, Auſcultation, and Medi-

Meditation is the principall cause of a Christian life, so Prayer is its principall nourishment where it hath its growth and perfection: for by long experience we have found in our Religion, that all those who profit in our Religion, and have arrived to the highest degrees of sanctity, have attained it by frequent and continuall Prayer; and we have observed, that they have taken such gust and complacence in it, that they have despised all other humane delights as vile, abject, and unworthy of them. Nor doth this happen onely to the most eminent and learned sort of those which flourish in sanctity, but it is commonly found in the simple and ignorant, as well men as women, and even in all those who have learned to leade a Christian life. By this effect therefore we may prove the Verity of our Faith.

Almighty

Almighty God being a pure Act, the first Verity, and an infinite Light, the neerer a man makes his approach unto him, the more abundantly doth he partake this Purity, Verity, and Light; But man doth not make his approach unto Almighty God by corporall paces, but by the purity of life, elevation of mind, and contemplation of Verity: Seeing therefore that there can be no life more candid and more sincere, then that of Christians; and that then the mind of man is most pure, when it is wrapt up in a soaring and extaticall contemplation of the Divine perfections, it follows, that man is most possessed of this Verity and Light, as he is in the very act of prayer and contemplation: and seeing that we find by experience, that Christians as they encrease in the fervour of Devotion and frequency of Prayer, are more and more confirmed

firmed in their Faith, and inflamed with the love of Christ, and profit in virtue, we must confesse that the Faith, Verity, and Light of Christian Religion is Divine. Our understanding affecting Verity as its proper perfection, and abhorring Falsity as its greatest enemy; man is in nothing so disposed for the entertaining of Verity and rejecting of contraries as in the very act of Prayer and Contemplation; by which he doth most stedfastly and ardently embrace the documents of Faith, which therefore cannot be erroneous.

Moreover, all Christians in their Prayers to Almighty God, do beseech him to grant that for the which they pray, by the merits of Christ; for in the end of every prayer they most commonly adde some such form, *Through Jesus Christ our Lord*: or, *Through Christ our Lord*,

Lord, and yet they obtain admirable and incredible graces from him; which if any ſhould not believe, yet certainly they muſt grant that which by daily experience is manifeſt, that they obtain that which they principally ſeek after, the righteouſneſſe of a virtuous life, the quiet and joyfulneſſe of mind; ſo as they preferre the pious tears of Devotion farre before any delights and pleaſures of the world. Now certainly if Chriſt were not he whom our Faith proclaims him to be, they could not in ſo great a ſerenity of mind, and at ſo near a diſtance of ſo great a light be environed and buried in ſo great a darkneſſe; nor would Almighty God permit them to be ſo groſly deceived, or at leaſt, if they were obſtinate in an errour, he would not grant their petitions.

Again, every cauſe diſpoſing its matter for the producing its effect, after

after it hath introduced its last disposition, immediately produces it, nor would it dispose the matter unlesse it meant to introduce the form; nor any cause of motion would produce it, if it intended not some end of the motion produced; but a just man unlesse he were invited and drawn on by Almighty God, who is the first cause of all things, could not elevate his mind unto him by prayer. Blisse therefore being the end of prayer and a virtuous life, Almighty God would not induce man unto those means of prayer and virtue, unlesse he intended to make him finally blessed. If therefore Christians making progresse in virtue and prayers become more grounded and settled in their Faith and Contemplation of Christ, their Faith cannot be but from Almighty God, by which he leades men unto blisse.

Every

Every cauſe grants (as I may ſay) unto its effect what it asks; the effect asks of its cauſe its due and proper perfections, which then it is ſaid to exact, when it is rightly diſpoſed: for then the cauſe, if not otherwiſe hindred, delaies not the execution of the effect, infuſing that quantity of perfection into it, which the degree of diſpoſition doth exact; which immediate execution proceeds out of its facility and goodneſſe, which of its nature is deſirous to communicate it ſelf. Almighty God therefore being the moſt ſovereign good, queſtionleſſe will more then other cauſes which have not ſo great goodneſſe grant the petitions to this effect, eſpecially unto thoſe which are beſt diſpoſed for the receiving his favours as are Chriſtians, chiefly, when they are in the act of Prayer and Contemplation; but Chriſtians ask nothing more then the

light

light of truth, according to that of the Psalmist, *Illumina oculos meos nè unquam obdormiam in morte:* Enlighten my eyes that I never sleep in death. And therefore Almighty God never denies them their request; but Christians the more they pray, the more they are confirmed in their Faith, therefore this our discourse is of greater force.

Further, if Christ were not God, to professe himself so would be the most supreme degree of blasphemy and detestation that could be. Now if Christians do pray to God the Father through Christ, whom they believe to be of the same nature with the Father and the holy Ghost, how doth Almighty God permit them in so great an errour arising out of ignorance and simplicity, and doth not draw them out of it, knowing that they serve him with their whole affection, and humbly beg of him the

the knowledge of truth? or if their obſtinacy be in fault, why doth he leave ſo great a wickedneſſe and treaſon againſt his Divine Majeſty unrevenged? or why doth he (as we ſee him) favour this errour and impiety? whilſt beſtowing ſo many and great gifts on them he queſtionleſſe grants them that which they ask at his hands.

Our ſoul (as I have ſaid) doth chiefly delight in Verity, and is diſturbed, perplexed, and confounded with Falſity, in which it can take no reſt; if therefore the Faith of Chriſt were falſe, there would be no impoſture ſo abſurd and peſtilent as it; for how ſhould innumerable men, eſpecially juſt and wiſe-men, ſo imploy themſelves in the contemplation of Chriſt crucified, that for this alone they ſhould deſpiſe all humane affairs, and ſhould not onely moſt willingly ſuffer want of ſuſtenance,

labours,

labours, heats and cold, contumelies, threats, buffets, prisons, and most cruel racks, and torments, nay, death it self, but if they be without them, do wish to undergo them: truly we may say, the finger of God is here.

CHAP. X.

The same Verity proved out of the exteriour worship of Christians.

I Have now shewed out of the principall cause of Christian life; to wit, the reading of holy Scriptures and exercise of Prayer; by which it is conceived, nourished, increased, and perfected, that our Religion is true and void of all falsity and deceit, which are the interiour causes of it. Now I will briefly run over the externall causes, which serve as instruments and props of the internall; to wit, the Sacraments and

Ceremonies instituted in order to them, all which appertain unto the exteriour worship of Christian Religion; and that I may not spend time about every one in particular, I will treat of them altogether, as the different members of one and the same body. For all sacramentall Ceremonies, and even the other Sacraments having a reference unto the Sacrament of the Eucharist, they may be rightly styled one thing.

From this externall worship, if it be rightly observed, we see that Christians gain great improvement in their Devotion and Sanctity, for we see by daily experience even from the beginning of our Religion, to these very times by the records, attestation, and examples both of the Primitive and Modern Fathers, that those which piously and exactly practise this exteriour worship, and do often administer or receive those

Sacra-

Sacraments and divine Mysteries, or do take upon them some one, which before they had not, do increase in perfection, and become daily more divine by their admirable sanctity; and those on the contrary which do in a customary way, without Faith and Religion familiarly and accustomarily frequent them, become the worst of all men; which most plainly appears (to omit the examples of antiquity) in the Priests and Clergy of our times, then whom, if good, none better; but if evill, none are found more wicked and pernicious. For the good, as void of all affection to temporall things, onely insist in the worship of Almighty God, for whose sake and Faith they doubt not to spend their lives; those which are bad are so excessive in their impieties, so puft up with pride, envy, avarice, and so overwhelmed with

all vices, that as altogether loſt, and which is worſt of all, they know not how to think of amendment, and then chiefly, when by admonition, reprehenſion, exhortation, and good examples, by which others are wont to enter into themſelves, they become more harſh, refractory and intractable. Theſe things being ſo and as preſent before our eyes, being no way refragable, we muſt ſeek the reaſon why two ſuch contrary effects proceed from the ſame Ceremonies of the ſame Sacraments. Now it is not repugnant to Philoſophy that two contrary effects proceed from one and the ſame cauſe, if the matters ſubjected have contrary diſpoſitions; for the earth by the beams and heat of the ſunne of ſoft becomes hard, and ice by the ſame of hard is diſſolved into a liquid humour. A tree, whilſt it ſtands rooted in the earth, by influence of the Planets

bringeth forth blossomes and fruit, and by the same influence when it is rooted up, it withers: and truly those effects being so opposite, that the one is most excellent in those which perform those sacred Mysteries (as I have said) with due veneration; the other most pernicious in those which do abuse them, they cannot proceed from any vain or false cause; & this not appearing so in men of any other Religion, there can be no other reason of it given, but their different and contrary worship of Almighty God; for if the exteriour worship of Christian Religion did not depend of God himself, and did not contain in it self that divine Virtue and Verity in such a manner as instruments do contain the virtue of their principall cause, they would no way be able to produce, increase, and consummate the most excellent effect of Christian sanctity. This exteri-

our worſhip cannot produce this effect of its own proper force, becauſe Chriſtian life being wholly ſpirituall, and conſiſting in the intellectuall part of man, cannot ſubſtantially proceed from corporall inſtruments: for what can Baptiſme, the anointing with oil and balm, the uſe of incenſe, the oblation of Bread and Wine, the Altars, and other ſuch extrinſecall things of their own vertue, conduce to the perfection of the ſoul, unleſſe they were the inſtruments of ſome ſuperiour cauſe? For if theſe were introduced for a ſuperſtitious worſhip by any humane invention or diabolicall impoſture, a life ſo holy would never proceed from ſo wicked and vain illuſions.

But ſome may object that this worſhip is not the cauſe of perfection, but rather the exerciſe of vertue and credulity of men, by which they believe it to be divine: for the good

ſtriving

striving daily by their virtues to root out their vices, do every day more then other grow perfect by those exercises. But we now seek the reason why others who are studious in the disciplines of virtue and morality, who either do not make use of these Sacraments, or do a long time refrain from the use of them, do swerve so farre from the integrity they aim at? Truly, if this worship were unprofitable or false, the more one should recede from it and cast it away, the more he would profit in the exercise of morall virtues: Priests also by deriding and contemning it would not grow more vicious, but more virtuous, the contrary of which daily experience teacheth.

Moreover, Almighty God being the supreme Verity, the more one is illuminated by him, the nearer he approaches unto him; but the more

a man is involved with falsity and errours, the farther he becomes distant from him: Now we know that those, who with Piety and Religion do frequent those mysteries, are so vehemently delighted with this Divine Worship, that oftentimes rapt out of themselves with the astonishment of their corporall part they remain immoveable, and their faces casting forth resplendent rayes of sanctity make them no lesse amiable then venerable; which though it happen'd oftner in the Primitive Ages (as we reade) then now-adayes it doth, yet there are not wanting those whom we know, which enjoy those priviledges, and those not onely of the learneder sort, but of the simple and vulgar people. Whence therefore is this kind of extasie? whence this absorpt and pleasant contemplation? whence this fervour of a spirit inflamed? those

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scalding lights, and sweet showers of devout tears? whence this ineffable jubilee of the Church melodiously rejoycing in her Hymns and Canticles? Truly, unlesse this worship were from God, and consequently true, there would be no where found so many dreams and lyes, it being wholly in a manner compacted of Types and mysterious Figures. For what ever is contained in the Mysteries, Sacraments, Temples, Altars, Mytres, Vestments, in all the world of Ceremoniall Rites, in the modulation of Hymns, and in the rest of the spirituall appurtenances would be a meer vanity and labour lost; all which, nevertheless, are instituted for the worship of Christ. If therefore this worship were sustained by the means of falsities, men, at least the wiser and more perspicacious wits, would not out of the meditation of those Sacraments be so won-

derfully elevated to the contemplation of Divine objects, nor repleniſhed with ſo great and celeſtiall delight; for the underſtanding (as I have ſaid) by falſities becomes more uncertain and dull, and at a greater diſtance from Almighty God; wherefore out of the contrary effect, we gather that this worſhip is true, and repleniſhed with Divine graces and favours.

The order alſo and ſignification of the things which are performed in the Church, ſhew clearly that it is no humane invention but a divine diſpoſition; for there is nothing in this worſhip irrational nothing vain, but every thing hath its order and proper myſtery, of which I ſhall not now ſpeak in particular, although in the third book I ſhall touch ſome, as the neceſſity of the ſubject will require. If any one deſires more fully to be ſatisfied of this Verity,

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let him revolve the explanations of the Fathers, where seriously weighing every one in particular, he shall never be satiated with admiration, to find in these Ceremonies no lesse order and harmony then in the universall work of Nature, and shall receive most excellent contentment and dilatation of heart; and if he be not of a perverse and obstinate condition, and have a mind wholly darkned, he shall be forced to confesse, that all those things are from God, and not invented and instituted by men.

Chap. XI.

The same Verity proved out of the intrinsecall effects of Christian life.

I Have hitherto proved to the power of my mean ability the Verity of Christian Faith by Arguments drawn

drawn out of both the internall and externall causes of a Christian life, now therefore I judge it fit to prove the same by descending to the effects of it; one of the principall effects, and immediately subsequent in that is, the peace and quiet of mind, the joy and liberty of the soul: for besides those examples which we reade and hear of our Authours and Predecessours, it is plainly seen in our age, that true Christians are not moved by the brushes and storms of persecution, but do persevere more immoveable in the Faith and Confession of Christ then before, and even glory in their tribulations and sufferings: we are to search therefore whence these effects proceed, and how it happens that the more they follow Christ in the perfection of their lives, they attain unto the greater liberty and serenity of mind.

Christi-

Christians themselves affirm this to be the reason of it, because (say they) this blisse of man consisting onely in our knowledge and contemplation of Divine objects, it is manifest that the desire and appetite of man cannot be bounded or limited by any ultimate and last end, which is not God himself: The quiet (therefore) and peace of mind that Christians possesse cannot proceed from any other thing, then that they have prefixt unto themselves that last end which of all others is the true one; whence if you should ask all Christians, what was their supreme end to which they aim at, question-less all would answer, that it was Almighty God; and therefore esteeming all worldly things as nothing in comparison of God, and hoping after their transitory life to obtain and enjoy him, they contemne and set at naught whatever the world contains.

tains. Hence it is, that being bereft and despoil'd of their worldly goods, they are not contristated; when careless of their lives, they offer themselves to death, that they may obtain Almighty God, their onely and supreme good: and as God is every where by his Essence, Presence, and Power, so is he in them also particularly by love and contemplation as the thing beloved is said to be in the party that loves. Now when the thing beloved is present, the mind of him that loves is delighted, and rejoyceth; and therefore Christians who live virtuously are extremely delighted with the presence of Almighty God, whom they internally do perceive as present. And because God is an infinite Power, when they experience his favours, slighting all other things, they fear nothing; and in this manner being armed with great liberty and confi-

dence,

dence, they are not drawn from their purposes and resolves neither by fair means, nor by any terrours whatsoever. But a man not being able by his naturall forces by reason of the sensuall impediments and weakness of his understanding to arrive unto this serenity and liberty of mind, we must necessarily (say they) confesse that this tranquillity and peace of mind is bestowed upon us as a most supernaturall and divine gift, by virtue of which Almighty God and our eternall blisse is daily before our eyes.

That that is the true cause of peace, joy, and liberty of mind in the Christians it is plain, our soul being one of the same, and having all its powers radicated in the essence of it, as often as it is wholly imployed in the intense operation of some one power, it cannot use the service of another but very remisly; for example,

ample, If one be in an intenſe contemplation, he is not expedite in the uſe of the other powers of his ſoul; and if one be in great pain, he is not at the ſame time fit for contemplation; if therefore Chriſtians were deceived by their Faith as by a vain credulity, no virtue of their ſuperiour cauſe would aſſiſt them to confirm ſo great an errour, and ſo they would be left onely to their naturall perfections, nay, even thoſe would be much impair'd by ſo great a deprivation of Verity; how therefore could they ſo inviolably preſerve ſo great a peace, joy, and liberty of mind amongſt ſo many calamities and oppreſſions, eſpecially ſo univerſally retain it, as not onely a few, but innumerable do? For the Philoſophers vaunt of one or two at moſt which they pretend amongſt them to have had this peace, quiet, and joy of mind; but we can produce

infinite

infinite of both sexes which in all parts of the world have possessed the tranquillity and liberty of mind in most excessive tribulations and torments, and this onely by invocating, praising, and glorifying Christ crucified. Moreover, we have found by the experience of our ancestours, and our own, that this peace, joy, and liberty of mind is augmented by the increase of Faith, and sanctimony of a Christian life, which certainly would not be so, unless there was expected by Faith, Hope, and the true Profession of them, a true and solid good; for as a man profits more in the righteousnesse of life, so is he brought more into the knowledge and profession of the truth and good which he seeks by eschewing the contraries, and therefore if Christians had not found a solid good in the perfection of their lives, their joy would not

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be increaſed by it, but rather decreaſe as they ſhould find themſelves deceived in it.

This is very well confirmed out of the life of the religious, for to omit examples of paſt Ages (which I cannot compriſe in this ſhort Treatiſe) we daily ſee innumerable both men and women do betake themſelves to ſtrict Cloiſters out of the deſire of a more perfect life, forſaking their parents, kindred, friends, riches, and all pleaſures together with their own liberty to live with ſtrangers and extems, to whom they become ſo ſubject and obedient, that as for exteriour ſubſiſting and faculties they enjoy none, but thoſe which by the command of their ſuperiours are permitted them, as preciſely neceſſary for their livelihood, and thoſe to be changed and ſubſtracted as things though common to all, yet uncertain to every one in particular; but

but as for the corporall perfections, they keep the chastity of their mind and body most incorrupted and entire, subduing their carnall and sensuall appetites, by watching, fasting, abstinence, and other mortifications. And as for the perfections of the mind, of which liberty is the chief, they renounce of their own accord all the use of it with a perpetuall and most strict obligation, conforming themselves wholly to the will and disposition of their superiours. Thus having forsaken all the goods which mortalls are wont to call theirs, to rejoyce in, and be delighted with, all these who aspire to this perfection live so contented and joyful, that one would think they had even the abundance of all pleasures and delights, and by daily profiting in this way they become more full of tranquillity and alacrity, rejoycing and triumphing onely in the praises of

Christ

Christ crucified; and if one should ask why they did so, they all unanimously would answer, that all their joy and delight is placed in Christ Jesus, and in those things which have dependance of him.

First therefore I say that no man can with reason suspect that this should proceed out of folly, seeing it hath been the continuall practice not onely of humble and simple men, but of innumerable eminent Saints and Doctours who would easily by reason of their wisdome and sanctity discern the errour and folly of it, if it were vain and erroneous, for deceit and errour cannot any long time consist with wisdome and virtue; such men striving to attain unto the heighth of perfections, there being none greater then that which they aim at (to wit) a Christian religious life, of which that state is accounted the highest and supreme degree, certainly

mainly there are none more apt then they to receive celestiall illumination. If therefore the Faith were not true, questionlesse the vanity and deceit of it in many Ages, in so great a concourse of people of all conditions, especially by such wise and virtuous men had ere this been detected, nor had such men been able in so holy a servitude to preserve so great a peace and tranquillity of mind, and perpetually to take such comfort and joy in it. The contrary of which is manifest, for these are they who by their words and experience have confirmed, and do confirm it by their Writings, and as being set free, and onely subject to the graces and favours of Almighty God, do enjoy a most perfect peace and tranquillity of mind, and therefore all kind of deceit is farre distant from the Faith of Christ.

Every cause moved by its own good-

goodneſſe, which it ſeeks to extend and communicate, doth, as much as it may poſſible, direct its effect to its proper end, eſpecially, when the effect is diſpoſed for it, to which the more it approacheth, the more it is delighted and doth acquieſce in it. Now God is ſupremely good, and a moſt liberall and bountifull diſpenſer of his own goodneſſe, and therefore he directs all his effects, which are well diſpoſed, to their proper and deſerved ends, that they may take up their final reſt in them. Now there being no more intenſe diſpoſition for the end of man then that of moſt approved and religious men, he will queſtionleſſe direct them unto their wiſhed end in which they obtain their deſired reſt in the enjoying their end; but theſe by their daily progreſſe are more confirmed in the orthodox Faith, rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, do bend

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their whole endeavours in gaining him alone, setting all other things at naught. Whence it appears, that there is no errour or falsity in this Faith, otherwise, by the Divine direction, by forsaking more and more this false delight of mind, they would be directed to their true and wished for end and tranquillity.

All joy is grounded in some love or other, for love is the first act of the will or rationall appetite; from which the other acts have their influence. The joy therefore and jubilee of mind, which doth most unfeignedly appear in the countenances of those men, not consisting in any transitory, fading, or naturall perfection of the soul, and all of them affirming with one voyce and common content, that it proceeds from the love of Christ crucified, cannot be grounded in any errour or vain affection, because, the more uprightly and

and holily such men did live, the more it would decay in them; for (as I have said) if the Faith of Christ were false, they would daily more apparantly perceive, that in their prepostorous affections they were wholly deceived, and thence they would become more heavy and sorrowfull, but the sincerity of their deportments, the chearfulnesse of their countenances, that refulgent kind of sanctity in their exteriour, for which they are in such reverence and veneration of all men, shew it to be farre otherwise, whilst we may see them alwayes in all events more pleasant, content and joyfull.

Chap. XII.

The same truth proved out of the extrinsecal effects of Christian life.

ANother effect of Christian life is gathered from the exteriour man

man, from their manners and deportment, which is in a manner a sign and argument of a certain kind of Divinity, by reason of which many are even enforced to esteem and reverence them: whence the venerable aspect of humble men have blunted and affrighted the proud and fierce minds of Tyrants; which we reade of that powerfull and barbarous King of the Hunns, *Attila*, though he could be satisfied by no slaughter or massacre of men, nor terrified by any power of enemies, yet at Ravenna, a Speech of S. *Leo* Pope set him packing out of Italy, and he contrary to his wonted custome, and not without the great admiration of his followers, seemed not onely to reverence the venerable Bishop, but to obey him in a manner commanding him. And in like manner *Totilas* the cruel Emperour of the Gothes, after he had destroy-

ed so many thousands by innumerable massacres, wasted and consumed whole Nations, not being able to suffer the countenance of S. *Bennet* a poor Monk, fell down prostrate on his face, and could scarce raise himself, when the servant of God commanded and assisted him to rise. In like manner *Theodosius* the Emperour returning to Millain after his cruel slaughter of the Thessalonians, was by the authority of S. *Ambrose* chiding him, and reviling his cruelty, denied the entrance into the Church, untill he had by a publick penance enjoyn'd him by the Bishop, expiated his cruelty and injustice. I should want time, if I should recount the examples in this kind; but it is not for my present purpose to prove that which by daily examples is known to all, for I have often seen arrogant and wicked men in the presence of the holy and virtuous, both

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to have changed their words, and with great sorrow and compunction of heart to have reformed their lives. For the divine Spirit doth adorn the exteriour both of men and women, the younger with a wonderfull sweetnesse and grace, the elder men with the veneration of their white hairs, and makes them as the present matter requires, to become now amiable to some, and now again to some others formidable.

This effect in the exteriour proceeds out of the supernaturall bounty of the mind, that is, out of the grace of God adorning the understanding, will, and other powers of the soul, which we gather hence, that our soul vehemently altering our bodies by force of the imagination doth exceedingly change the countenance and visage: as by lascivious thoughts the body is stirred up to lust, and by the instigation of hatred it is in-

flamed with desire of revenge, whonce we experience that the body is much altered by force of the imagination; and by the alteration of the sensible appetite, and the commotion of the spirits, the face and visage is straightway changed, so that by fear men are wont to become pale and wan; by anger and bashfulnesse red and blushing, and joy and sorrow make their severall impressions in the countenance. The reason is, because our understanding using corporall instruments and organs, what ever passes in the interiour, especially any vehement conceits, hath its influence into the corporall and exteriour parts, especially into the face and eyes, for we plainly discern in proud men an arrogance of look; in the cruel, a stern and fierce cast of their eyes; in the light ones, a subtil and unconstant deportment; and in the lascivious, a

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wanton aspect; nay, some malevolous old women with the very contagion of their looks are said to infect and fascinate little infants: to conclude, the good and evill habits of the mind, especially if they have taken deep root, can scarce by any dissimulation be so hidden, that they appear not in the exteriour. Every cause therefore likening its effect, and every effect making an expression of its cause, this exteriour beauty and comlinesse of Christians, and this honest and venerable manner of deportment cannot proceed from any other cause then the beauty of the mind and integrity of their life.

Which effect we daily see to be of such virtue, that as we daily experience there is nothing to be found more energeticall and efficacious for the conversion of sinners, for we experience that the examples of

ſimple Chriſtians living uprightly have profited men more then the perſwaſions of learned and eloquent Philoſophers, nay, even the relations or beholding of miracles. For we often ſee eloquent and learned men whilſt they are preaching high and elevated ſubtilties of knowledge to be hearkned unto with great attention, but their lives not correſponding to their words, they have profited the Church very little, but onely born away the reports and praiſes of their eloquence and wiſdome. In paſt and preſent Ages there have been many miracles which little conduced to the amendment of life; for though we ſee multitudes of men flock together to ſee them, yet if we look more diligently into it, we ſhall find that very few have reaped the profit of bettering their lives by them, but by the perfection of a vertuous Chriſtian, we both have

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known and seen innumerable sorry and contrite for their sins, and converted unto Almighty God, and those not onely of the vulgar and simple sort of people, but most eminent in prudence and learning; of the which very many having felt the odour of a good fame and sanctity, contemning the pleasures and delights of the world, have betaken themselves to these happy and religious Societies and Monasteries, where loathing their former courses, they passe their lives with exceeding content, pleasure, and sincerity.

Hence it is manifest, that there is some virtue in Christians by which these admirable effects are produced, for a body hath no substantiall influence into a spirit, which we see manifestly expressed in the most formall body of all, to wit, the celestiall which suffer nothing from any corporall virtue; for the heavens suffer

not from the neighbouring fire, much leſſe therefore ſhall a ſpirit ſuffer by any corporall influence. Thoſe things therefore that are exteriour and viſible in a Chriſtian life being corporall, they cannot have any proper and ſubſtantiall influence into the ſoul, by which it may receive benefit, unleſſe thereby ſome virtue be together infuſed into it; but in a Catholique and virtuous man the moſt eminent and chief virtue, from which an upright inſtitution of life, exteriour beauty, and holy converſation doth proceed, is the immaculate Faith and Love of Chriſt crucified; for this Faith and Love being augmented, their exteriour ornaments and veneration are increaſed, and of greater efficacy for the converſion of men. Faith therefore which operates with love cannot be a deceit, ſeeing that falſity is void of all virtue, and cannot penetrate the heart of man.

Verity is more powerfull then falsity, but there was never any virtue or remedy found more efficacious for the living well and virtuously, then a Christian life, as we are taught by the comparison of Philosophers and other men, by whose learning and examples very few have been converted to a good life, and by the life of Christians innumerable do daily rise and leade most unspotted lives; and therefore a vain and erroneous falsity cannot be the ground or root of this life, otherwise, men would more easily be reclaim'd to the amendment of their lives, by the learning and morality of Philosophers, then by Christian examples, which we find most false by experience.

Moreover Almighty God being the first mover without whom there is not the least motion, and doing all things by his wisdome, he subordi-

nates the nobler effects to the nobler causes; but the most excellent of all effects is a Christian life: Almighty God therefore by exhortations, and chiefly by internall inspirations stirring up men to this life by most conspicuous examples of the faithfull, to the end that the cause may produce an effect like it self, as the sunne and men do generate a man, it follows necessarily that a perfect Christian is the noblest cause and most perfect instrument of producing this effect: Therefore the virtue of this instrument co-operating with Almighty God is not a falsity, but a most supreme Verity; but this virtue is Faith inflamed with a burning charity, as I have shown; our Faith therefore is most true.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The same confirmed by the wonderfull works of Christ, and first by his Power.

WE have proved now by the assistance of Almighty God the Verity of Christian Faith out of the manifest effects, which daily are seen in the Orthodox Church, and although there might be manifold other arguments brought to the confirmation of it, yet having regard to my intended brevity, I will argue onely out of those events of former Ages, of the Verity of which the whole world is a sufficient witnesse. Wherefore, as Philosophers by the effects which they saw in naturall things were moved to search into the causes of things, we in like manner setting before our eyes the triumph of Christ, which

which we have heretofore deſcribed, will moſt exactly, as farre forth as the matter requires, ſearch into the cauſes of thoſe effects. And as the Philoſophers contemplating the nature of things, out of the greatneſſe, the wonderfull order and perfection of the whole world, did conclude that the cauſe of it was Almighty God, who was more powerful, wiſe, and perfect then all others, whom they termed the firſt principle and mover of all things; ſo we contemplating the triumph of Chriſt crucified, will ſhew him to have been, and to be beyond all compariſon more powerfull then the feigned Gods of all other Religions, and to have done greater things, and produced perfecter effects then any, and with an ineffable and infinite wiſdome and goodneſſe to have infinitely ſurpaſſed them. Which done it will be clear that this God,

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is the great Lord and King above all other Gods.

I will begin with the effects of his Power, and placing his triumph before your eyes, I argue in this manner. Either this Jesus the crucified Nazarean, whom the Christians adore is true God, and first cause of all things, or he is not; if he be, the disputation is ended, because, if he be God, the Christians Faith, and his universall Doctrine and Religion must be true: if he be not, it follows, that Jesus the Nazarean was a most prodigious monster, of a most inexcogitable pride, and unheard of arrogance, whilst being a pure creature and mortall man, he would be esteemed as the onely supreme Deity, and adored above all others: whence we might justly tearm him the most lying and worst of all creatures, nay, even the most notorious of all fools, for undertaking

dertaking a buſineſſe of ſo great conſequence; for what is more contrary to reaſon, or what can be found more mad and ridiculous, then that an inferiour and poor beggarly man, without all power and riches, onely by virtue of an unpoliſhed and naturall eloquence, nay, even by the torments of a moſt horrible death ſhould dare to ſtrive againſt and contend with the divine Majeſty, and deſpoiling it of its due honour, ſhould dare to involve in a new and unheard of Religion all men, as well powerfull and learned, as the moſt weak and ignorant, and at the ſame time ſhould command the Ceremonies and religious Rites of other Gods to be demoliſhed; and the whole world inured and accuſtomed for ſo many paſt Ages to their own faſhions, like an impetuous and violent river, to be turned now quite out of its channel and changed,

changed, and that he alone was to be adored for God? And all this, not onely in his life time, but much more after his cruel and violent death; and with this condition also, that men should not onely love and adore him, but for his love sake should undergo the most difficult things, most repugnant to nature, and of quite intolerable suffering: and to conclude, not being terrified by any excesse or atrocity of torments, they should most promptly and willingly undergo the last of all terrours, Death it self.

Here let me ask thee what ever thou art, if any mortall should intend to do such things as these, and should consider them in his mind, and should manifest unto you this secret, what wouldst thou say? Wouldst thou think any other man so mad as he? Wouldst thou not judge that he were so much the more

more to be laughed at, by how much those things did seem more impossible? If therefore Jesus the Nazarean be not God, relying upon what assistance hath he with a continuall fight so prevailed against his own and all other nationall Laws, Princes, Wise-men, and against the whole world strugling against him, the infernall and supernall powers, and chiefly against the supreme Creatour of all things? That he is esteemed equall to God, adored with equall veneration, and that invincibly he hath obtained all these things amidst so great and continuall repugnances of so many Ages; wherefore, O ye Jews! hath God your Governour and Conserver of the world permitted so great a wickednesse so long unrevenged? And you, O ye Gentiles! why have not your Gods expelled him? How hath this despicable man nail'd to a Crosse,

Crosse, and dead, left behind him the power to do so many and so great things? Who ever of those (I will not say men) who were esteemed as Gods, was to be compared to this? Seeing their brawls and contentions, their sacriledges and incests were esteemed nefarious even by their own sectaries.

Do you not see how impudently some have dar'd to compare *Apollonius Thyaneus* with our Christ? For who can be any way compared with reason to him, either of the princes of Philosophy; as, *Pythagoras Socrates, Plato*, and the rest, or of the most excellent and famous Kings and Emperours; as, *Alexander, Cesar*, and others? of whom none professed himself to be God, nor have they even altogether performed the least part of those things which have been done by Christ and his Disciples: for what great matter

hath

hath that crafty commander of the Arabians *Mahomet* done? he never affirmed himself God, ttue it is, by his eloquence and power, by his arms, gifts, and a luxurious licence of pleasures, he drew unto him a barbarous and unskilfull multitude; and did not he give a most honourable testimony of Christ? Assuming to himself nothing above humane forces and policy, but such was not Jesus the Nazarean; never did any mortall propose more difficult things to be believed and done then Christ did; for he absolutely commanded the belief of a Trinity, to wit, the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, the same one God three really distinguished persons, which yet being identified in substance, were one, and the self same entity. Then he commands himself to be believed as God the Sonne, being the same with the Father and the holy Ghost, and

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that he is at the same time true man, the sonne of the Virgin *Mary*, whom he also commands to be adored as the true Mother of God; that the Crosse also, which was alwayes esteemed as the instrument of equivalent ignominy, should be held in most supreme honour and veneration, as the chief sign of our salvation: In his last supper he commanded by his last Will and Testament, that we believe that Bread and Wine by virtue of a few words of Consecration were really and substantially changed and transubstantiated into his Body and Bloud, notwithstanding, that the wonted accidents of Bread and Wine persisted, and that we should under those signes of Bread and Wine adore him, and receive him as nourishment and a celestiall *viaticum* by which he promised us eternall life, and that no body could enter

enter into the kingdome of Heaven unleſſe they were born again of water and the holy Ghoſt. Moreover, he commanded that all his Scriptures ſhould be believed to a tittle without heſitation, doubt, or derogation; notwithſtanding they contain things moſt difficult to humane underſtanding, without the belief of all which, there was no ſalvation. Nor is this conſtant and firm veneration of thoſe things ſufficient, unleſſe contemning viſible things, and loving the inviſible, we do patiently undergo all kind of perſecutions. *In patientia enim veſtra poſſidebitis (inquit) animas veſtras:* In your patience you ſhall (ſaith he) poſſeſſe your ſouls. He promiſed his followers and ſervants in this life, not riches, honours, and dignities, but the clean contrary, to wit, poverty, ignominy, oppreſſion, and what is more, outrages, blows, baniſhment,

gaols,

gaols, conflicts, and torments, by suffering which for his sake, he promises us an unspeakable beatitude; promising things unto us which exceed the understanding of man, as Glory, for example, in heaven with the Angels, the Resurrection of the bodies, and *that which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath ascended into the heart of man:* These things notwithstanding being so, he brought to passe whatever he pleased, although the world fought against him. For innumerable men of all sorts and conditions, have so received and maintained this Doctrine, that they chose rather to leave their lives then to forsake their Faith. Kings also and Princes (as we see at present) humbly inclining themselves under the yoke of Faith, are obedient to his inferiour Ministers. Let us set therefore before our eyes Christ as a poor man, accounted formerly

and esteemed the sonne of a Carpenter, and contemned by those that knew him, and let us ask him what he thinks: Now let him answer, I, though a poor man and a stranger to the world, do intend to bring the whole world under my Laws, and do intend that men do adore me as a true God, together with my Father, and the holy Ghost, and that they also worship the Crosse, on which being nail'd, I shall die a most ignominious and cruel death, between two theeves, and after this cruel death, that they do most devoutly and honourably reverence the Instruments and Reliques of my torments, and preserve and place them amongst their chief and precious jewels and treasures. And that above all things with Faith and their best Devotions, they adore this Sacrifice of Bread and Wine, as the true substance of my Body and

Bloud

Bloud, and that by the Water of holy Baptisme, they believe their souls to be cleansed from all spot of sinne, and that they are sanctified by the anointing of Oyl and Balm; and lastly, that receiving and observing my whole Doctrine entirely, they esteem it as a great wickednesse to derogate ought from it, even to the last tittle; and that they honour and make their addresses unto my Mother, being sanctified with an uncorrupted and perpetuall Virginity, and esteem her next unto God, as Lady and Queen of the Universe, by a speciall prerogative exalted above all the quire of Angels, and that they make their supplications to those which from being Fishermen I have chosen to be my Disciples, and that they adore their very bones, ashes and other reliques: wouldst thou not judge this poor man, thinking and speaking such things

things of himſelf to be a ſot, fool, and worthy onely to be laughed at?

If further whilſt thou laugh'ſt at him, he ſhould go on, and ſay it is my will, that they not onely do moſt firmly beleeve all thoſe things, but that for this reaſon, they lead their lives moſt continently and uprightly, and for my promiſe given them of an inviſible happineſſe, they deſpiſe all terrene and ſenſible things, and to ſhew their moſt ardent affection towards me, they do moſt willingly undergo poverty, thirſt, famine, toils, miſeries, torments, and moſt cruel deaths, and that they chooſe rather all theſe things then deny the leaſt tittle of my Doctrine? Wouldſt thou not think this man wholly mad and out of his wits? If he ſhould adde to this, it is my pleaſure that all this be brought to paſſe againſt the reſiſtance of the whole

whole world, against Kings and Princes, against all the Religions and sects of Gods and men; I intend to fight against infernal powers to gain the victory, and triumph over them, questionlesse thou wouldst burst into a louder laughter.

But if being asked by what confidence or arms he meant to effect those things? he should answer, by no other then by the preaching of himself and his Disciples; and because eloquence hath a great force to perswade the minds of men (lest any of his victories should be attributed unto it) that he should affirm that faculty no way to fit his purpose, and that his Ministers should bring those things to effect, without all art, by a sober, modest and simple narration of those things, thou wouldst ascribe this to a higher degree of madnesse. If he should go on, I know that for my sake an infi-

nite multitude of men would periſh; that the more there die, the more the number of the faithful ſhall increaſe, and my Faith ſhall be propagated to the fartheſt ends of the world; for the bloud of my Martyrs ſhall, as the Seed of the Church, yield a fruitfull harveſt of my Believers; and I will deliver unto one of thoſe my Fiſhermen, and to his Miniſters, which ſhall never fail, by a continuall inheritance the perpetuall Sceptre of the Kingdome of Heaven, and I will make to ſtoop the ſupreme City and Lady of the world, and the Emperour himſelf to kiſſe the feet of my Subſtitutes. Oh! if thou ſhouldſt hear him ſay ſo, with what furies, I will not ſay madneſſe, wouldſt thou think him to be agitated? what peals of laughter wouldſt thou not beſtow upon him?

Hearken to him a little further, there ſhall be infinite Books writ-

ten

ten of me, by most excellent and learned men, which shall praise and magnifie both me and my Doctrine, and extolling it above all others, shall defend it with their whole forces; my Priests shall with great reverence of the people, with solemne pomp and magnificence, and with torches lighted proclaim the same, which all the auditours shall receive uncovered with a reverend and most humble attention; would not these things seem dreams unto thee?

Hear him conclude, being armed with this onely weapon, without all doubt I will bring all those things to perfection, and with an invincible power, I will prove my self victorious, and will bring the whole world under my obedience, nor shall there ever any prevail against these ground-works and foundations of my Religion.

Whilst he asseverred these things

demonſtrations notwithſtanding in naturall things there are found very few, but in the high and moſt eminent things, as alſo in moralls there are found no demonſtrations at all. But the light of our underſtanding is ſo weak, that it doth not diſcern the proper difference of things: for the Philoſophers uſe accidents inſtead of differences, and therefore they are ignorant of the proper definitions of things; the eſſence therefore or definition of the thing, being the mean or middle term of a demonſtration, it follows, that few or no demonſtrations are found in naturall things; wherefore, it is very hard to ſettle or ground our underſtanding in naturall and morall Sciences, much more in metaphyſicall, and moſt of all to apply our underſtandings, and altogether to attract our will, that we draw it from vices to virtues; for the ſenſuall part, being oppoſite

to

to the ſpirituall and rationall, it is very difficult that the affection follows the underſtanding, but of all things it is moſt difficult to make both Powers ſo agree, that the fruit of good works do iſſue from them, and perſevere unto the end of our lives; for of every Philoſopicall Theſis there are almoſt as many opinions as heads, and very few of them effect what they teach, and ſcarce any of them have perſevered unto the end of their lives without corruption of vices, and if any one ſuch be found, they account it a miracle. Now if the very chief of thoſe Philoſophers could not convince the underſtanding of man to beleeve thoſe few truths which reaſon it ſelf dictates, and are naturally ingrafted in us, as that there is a God, and that he doth exerciſe his Providence about humane affairs; that good is to be ſought after, and evill

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avoided, and others of the like nature; and if they could not reconcile the affection in a very few things with the understanding for their well-doing, that they did not finally disagree, by how much would they be lesse able to perform it in things which exceed the bounds of reason: But the Disciples of Christ with their onely preaching did unite the will and understanding of an infinite multitude of men, and, as it were, transfixing them, did enforce them to believe and love those things unto the which neither demonstration it self, nor any humane reason could any way arrive, so that for the promise of heaven, they have esteemed all earthly things as drosse, and becoming indefatigable in their labours, they could not be removed from their purposes, neither by fair means, threats or torments. Now by what virtue have poor ignorant Fishermen

Fishermen done these things? certainly by no Humane power, but Divine. For nature hath expressed the whole forces she had towards mortalls in the Philosophers, and yet we see, she hath not had in them the force to accomplish those things. Certainly if the Faith of Christ were stuffed with lies, questionlesse a few Fishermen could not have done those wonders in confirmation of it, nor could the Faith it self have persisted in its full force so long time against so powerfull and manifold oppositions.

Moreover, if Christ crucified and his Fishermen drew so efficaciously the whole world to the Divine love as I have said, they could not do it by plain and bare words, for grave, wise, and learned men are not led away with bare words; wherefore it is certain that they confirmed their words with miracles, which were so

many, ſo ſtupendious, that farre ſurpaſſing the limits of nature, they could onely be wrought by Almighty God, who alone is the authour of miracles. But the Divine Majeſty doth not give teſtimony to the confirmation of lies, but of Faith, and therefore the Faith of Chriſt, in confirmation of which they are done, cannot be falſe. Now if any ſhould deny miracles, this would be the greateſt miracle of all, that thoſe manifold and admirable things, of which I have made mention ſhould be done without miracles by Chriſt a poor man, and thoſe ignorant and unpoliſhed Fiſhermen his Diſciples. Therefore, whether Chriſt and his diſciples did ſhine with miracles or no. certainly an infinite power ſurpaſſing all the power of all Gods, doth appear in his works; but as of all cauſes that is the firſt which hath more power then the reſt, ſo amongſt

Gods

Gods, he is truly to be esteemed the true God, which is most eminent above all others in power, as is Christ our most invincible Conquerour.

Chap. XIIII.

The same concluded out of the Wisdome of Christ.

I Will now shew that his Wisdome was inferiour to none. First, then it is the part of Wisdome to order and dispose things rightly, but in all things which are to be directed to their ends, the rule of Government ought to be drawn from the end of them; for then every thing is rightly disposed when it is directed to its proper end, for the end of every thing is its supreme and chief good; whence those that in the studies of arts do so regard the end, that they direct all other subordinate things

things unto it, are called masters of that art. As in Architecture, those work-men which carry the stones, wood, lime, and other requisits are not said to be architects, but those which give the chief disposition, proportion, and form to the building. In artificiall things, they having onely their particular ends, in which the end of man doth not consist; he that shall be skilfull in those is not to be term'd absolutely wise, but with a restriction to his art. He therefore is rightly to be styled absolutely wise, who observing the supreme and consummate end of humane life, doth dispose all fit means and all his actions and operations unto it; But Jesus the Nazarean efficaciously teaching his Disciples and Followers, shew'd them the true end of mans life, and the true means by which they were to arrive unto it, and this not onely by his Word, but

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by his lively example, so that no end of humane life can be found out, or imagined better, or more perfect, then the life of Christians. Wherefore it is clear that neither amongst the Gods of the Gentiles (suppose the impossibility of their Deity) nor amongst men there ever was or could be found a wiser then Christ.

The sign of a knowing man is to be able to teach, for when a man is arrived unto the perfection of a Science he can easily teach it others, as in naturall things for example. When a man hath attained unto a perfect age, he is capable of propagating mankind by generation of children: but there was not any other God or man from the beginning, who taught a more profitable wisdome then that of Christians, or who taught it with greater facility: as for the learning of Philosophers, it is obscure, and scarce to be learned

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in long time, and perplexed with many difficulties and errours, by reaſon of which the very maſters themſelves are very uncertain and anxious, as I have ſaid before that they were concerning the divine Providence, and in the end of humane life, but after the ſupreme wiſdome of our Saviour and Maſter Chriſt appeared, the world was ſo illuſtrated in a ſhort time with the Doctrine of the divine Providence and Goodneſſe, of the immortality of the ſoul, of the end and beatitude of man, of the means to arrive unto it, and many other documents that Chriſtians of both ſexes, even in their tender age and infancy did more clearly penetrate thoſe things, then famous Philoſophers had done by their great induſtry and ſtudy. And they became ſo conſtantly grounded in this Doctrine, that they had rather ſuffer a thouſand torments

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even to death it self, then impiously deny the least tittle of the Doctrine of Christ.

The virtue of the cause appears the greater, the further it operates and the quicker; wherefore, the more quicker that Wisdome hath its effect in men, the more questionlesse is its power. 'Tis not the work of a principall virtue or industry to make those wise which are docile, and have their minds greatly disposed for wisdome: but suddenly to teach fools, children, dullards, girls, reprobates, and most wicked men, and strumpets wisdome, and convert them unto a good life, exceeds all humane forces. But our Christ Jesus did not onely convert innumerable of those, but also of prudent and learned men presently, with onely a beck, and made a change in their lives by the true compunction of their hearts, and daily doth not cease from those effects,

fects, which none ever of the Gods or men have done; and therefore his Wisdome and Doctrine is to be preferred before all. When Nature is determined to do something in particular, it is not to be esteem'd the part of any rare virtue to effect it in naturall things by means which are naturall, as if a spirituall creature by the application of fire to a house should straight burn it, which was not hard for any man to do; but if it were performed by contrary causes as by striking fire out of ice to raise a great combustion, this would be esteemed a work of great virtue. It is a sign therefore of a supreme and infinite virtue to produce all naturall effects without any naturall instrument, or to do any thing with any instrument, or to do it with the instruments ordained for contrary effects. Wherefore, to teach wisdome by due and naturall means according

cording to the wonted capacity of men as the Philophers do, is no matter of admiration; but to teach us the supreme and ineffable wisdome by the folly of the world, that is by those things which men commonly esteem foolish and absurd, and to convert those follies into the instruments of divine Wisdome, and to place the chief Wisdome in them is a most difficult work, and to be esteemed onely Divine. For if the horrour and contumely of the Cross, together with the scorns, buffets, stripes and torments, which Christ in his death did suffer, be rightly considered, there could be found nothing more foolish and horrible then the Crosse, before Christ was nailed unto it; but Christ by means of it did infuse into the wood, the most sovereign of all Wisdomes, as all Christians do professe and testifie by daily experience; therefore the

the ſupreme and divine Wiſdome hath been onely found in Chriſt Jeſus.

Alſo, Wiſdome being the honour and badge of Divine things, certainly that Wiſdome is to be preferred before all others, which teaches men Divine things better then all others: but this hath been done by none ſo well as by that of Chriſt; therefore this muſt be the moſt excellent of all. But that it is ſo appears out of the Writings before Chriſt, which are not contained in his Doctrine, which if they be compared with the Books and Monuments of Chriſtians, thou wilt eaſily confeſſe that there were very few things taught by the Philophers and other Authours. Nay, what is more, Chriſtian Doctrine doth extremely conduce to the increaſe and perfection of Philoſophy it ſelf, ſeeing it doth ſo wonderfully every way lay open the knowledge of

of Divine things, that almost all Christians do professe, know and teach those things which before them were scarce understood by the Prophets themselves. And after the preaching of the Apostles men did so blush at their own errours, and strive to purge themselves of them, in such sort, as if having wandred in a dark night and weltred in the dirt of their errours, being environed on a sudden with a great light, beholding their impurities and stricken with shame and confusion they had endeavoured to cleanse themselves; for both the Philosophers and Poets being confounded at the worship of their Idols, at their old wives stories, and impure dotage, the light of Christ once shining (at whose abundant lustre they were dazled) they endeavoured to make good one lie with another, to feign their Allegoricall Interpretations, when they saw they

they could by no other means hide and justifie the wickedneſſe of their Gods, and their vices ſo enormious that the worſt of men would be aſhamed to own them.

It belongs alſo to a wiſe man not onely to have the knowledge of eaſie things, but of thoſe which are moſt difficult, and to be able to teach the ſame, and defend them againſt their adverſaries; no man ever taught more difficulties of Divine things, nor ever made them appear with more eaſe then Chriſt, who did not onely inſtruct his own few Diſciples, but even the whole world. And Chriſtians do eaſily defend thoſe documents againſt infinite opponents, that whoever ſhall have read their Arguments and Books they will not be able to doubt, that the verity of them proceeded of an eternall and incomparable Wiſdome. Our adverſaries fought againſt

againſt them moſt exactly, not onely with Sophiſtry, with captious and ſyllogiſticall contentions, but with contumely, threats, the ſword and death it ſelf, over all which their invincible Verity remained triumphant. Truly, if the Tyrants had contended with the Princes of the Philoſophers with both arguments and torments, as they did againſt Chriſtians, I am confident they would have been contented to deny their very firſt Principles; but Chriſt propoſing thoſe things which cannot be found out by naturall reaſon, and defending them both from the ſword and from all the wiſdome and injuries of the Gods and Philoſophers both, by his ſolid force eſtabliſhed them for all eternity.

Moreover, Chriſtians Faith is either true or fictitious; if true, we are agreed; if fictitious, even thence may be drawn an efficacious argument:

ment: That Christ was the most understanding and wise of all others which found out such difficult and sublime things, and did so perswade them unto mortalls, that they would not be infringed or destroyed by any device or humane reason or power. That Christian Doctours themselves do make profession of the science of Philosophy, and although those things which Christ taught were above the sphere of reason, yet they shew that they are no way repugnant unto Philosophy; and that other Sciences do rather serve to confirm them then otherwise. They do not as certain superstitious and ignorant people, who reject or contemn Philosophy, or some other true Science, challenging all things which are well said as their own, from others whom they say are unjust possessours of them. Now who is there to be found wise, cautious, and

subtill

ſubtill which can maintain any fiction and lie againſt all the arguments and reaſons of ſo many wiſe and learned men, and ſhew that they are conſonant to all Philoſophy? Truth certainly is conſonant to truth, and all truth is diſſonant to falſity. If therefore the Philoſophers not without great difficulty have been able to preſerve and protect Verity inviolate againſt their adverſaries, by how much leſſe will they be able to defend falſity being of its own proper nature weak, againſt violent and ſubtill oppoſition? therefore although it were granted that this Faith were fictitious, yet we ſhould neceſſarily conclude that Chriſt had the moſt piercing and elevated wiſdome of all others, who by his invitation hath drawn men unto him by moſt ſublime and uninveſtigable documents, and hath enforced them by a ſacred

inſpira-

inſpiration to leade virtuous and bleſſed lives. But ſeeing that things inconſiſtent cannot hang together, as for example, a falſe and true Philoſopher can have no true coherence; and that by his Doctrine men are directed as by a ſtraight rule to a virtuous life, we muſt confeſſe that his Faith and Doctrine is true, and that he is the wiſeſt of all Gods and men.

Hence it is that men moſt verſed and skilfull in all Sciences, and moſt eminent for the ſanctity of their lives have embraced that Doctrine of Chriſt as the ſupreme Wiſdome, and have extol'd it with their praiſes, magnified it with their Works and Monuments, and confirmed it with the teſtimony of their lives. Which had they not moſt certainly known that it was delivered unto men by Almighty God, certainly they had not undergone ſo many labours, toils

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and agonies for the defence of it.

The Wisdome of the greatest Master then chiefly appears, when by a compendious epitome he brings his Disciples to the end and last perfection of all Sciences, but this Christ alone hath effected; for every Science is either rationall or reall, as for rationall, it is either Logick, Rhetorick, or Poetry, which treats of *ens rationis*, or the entity of reason: and their end is by divers Arguments and Exhortations to force the understanding of man to assent to that which they intend. To this Christ himself hath above all other without all difficulty brought his Disciples; which most appears out of this, that whereas they were Fishermen formerly ignorant and unskilfull, and innumerable others of the simpler sort, who having once received this Doctrine have with most efficacious perswasions chang'd.

as it were, the face of the whole world, which neither the force of arms, nor other endeavours of all Wisdome (if we consider it aright) could ever have done. As for reall Science it is divided into practicall and speculative; the practicall is that which is morall, which Christian Discipline doth teach so exactly, and with such facility and celerity, that the Philosophers (as I have said before) can find no defect in it. If the Science be speculative, it either abstracts from all sensible and intelligible matter, and so it is that which is termed Divine, in the which Christ did so surpasse all others, that he is not onely the chief, but that there is no comparison to be made with him: or it abstracts onely from sensible matter and not from intelligible, and this is called Mathematick, by which one considers the form, and hath no regard

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to the good or end of it, (as the Philosophers say): and for this reason, the Doctrine of Christ onely attending the good and end of things imparts little to this Science, because it doth not appertain or conduce to salvation; yet if there be any profit to be gathered out of it which helps to a good and virtuous life, this the Christian Doctrine laies claim unto; for in holy Scriptures there are numbers and figures, which are most fitly disposed and ordered for the improving morality, and the contemplation of the Divine perfections, so that neither in the least Disciplines of Philosophy hath not this Doctrine its wholesome and profitable influence; or the Science abstracts from neither sensible nor intelligible matter, and this is naturall Philosophy, to whose greatest good and last end Christian Doctrine doth by divers means both easily and with great

content and pleaſure lead us. For the knowledge of naturall things in it ſelf, is not that ſupreme end unto which we ſtrive by them to attain unto, but by theſe corporall things we are brought unto the knowledge of inviſible objects, which the Chriſtian Doctrine doth afford with great ſatisfaction in great abundance, whilſt it repreſents moſt admirably, and to our great ſatisfaction the inviſible perfections and myſteries of Almighty God, in all naturall things as in ſo many mirrours; Chriſt therefore was the moſt wiſe Maſter of all, who moſt eaſily brought the whole world to the laſt end and higheſt perfection of all Sciences.

To conclude, the delights of the underſtanding farre exceed the pleaſures of the ſenſes, and that which chiefly appertains unto the underſtanding conſiſts in the knowledge of the firſt Verity, from which, as it

it is most perfectly conceived, arises the greatest delight. The sign therefore of the sovereign Wisdome of Christ, is the supreme delight which Christians enjoy in his contemplation, then which there hath been none hitherto found so great: for there have been innumerable, as now-adayes there are, which for the contemplation of the first Verity contained in the Christian Doctrine, forsaking all the pleasures and enticements of the world have betaken themselves to desert and sequestred places, and which is most of all, they have made such progresse in that contemplation, that a man would think they were not men, but petty Gods and Angels upon earth; for being as it were, elevated above the terrene sphere of carnality they do not onely not affect it, but do not so much as vouchsafe to look upon it, having within themselves like

Gods and Angels that which ſatiſfies and ſuffices them. Out of all which we may eaſily gather, that the Doctrine of Chriſt is the chief of all, and that Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is the true Wiſdome of the eternall Father, which onely was able to bring ſo many and ſo wonderfull things to paſſe.

Chap. XV.

The ſame Verity confirmed out of the Goodneſſe of Chriſt.

I Have now ſhown that Jeſus the Nazarean hath ſo farre ſurpaſſed all other men, and all the Gods of the Gentiles in Power and Wiſdome, that if any believe there is a God, he muſt queſtionleſſe judge no other beſide him to be ſo. It remains that I make the ſame appear out of his Perfection and Goodneſſe, by proving that he is the ſove-

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reign of all Goods and the last end of humane life, in which we must in the first place observe, that humane actions are directed to some end or other; for the actions of men as they are humane proceed questionlesse from the free will or election of man, by which he differs from brutes. Now the object of the will is some good or end prefixt, and therefore there being no infinite or endlesse processe of those prefixed ends (otherwise the motion of every appetite would cease) it is necessary there be one last end of man, for it is impossible there should be two substantiall last ends of any thing, seeing that beyond the last end there remains nothing to be sought after. That is called the last end which doth so satiate the appetite of any thing that it formally includes, or at least subordinates all those things which can be desired or

ſought after, and therefore there is but one and the ſame laſt end of all men. Nevertheleſſe we muſt know that all men do not agree about their laſt end, as it is taken materially, that is, where and in what it is found; although all agree in the formall conceit of it, that is, in the nature of it, and in what it conſiſts, becauſe the nature of the laſt end of mankind is the ſupreme felicity of it. Now all men agree in the deſire of their chief felicity, yet all do not think that that felicity conſiſts in the ſame thing. Having formerly proved that the laſt end of humane life is the firſt Verity and firſt cauſe, that is, Almighty God, if I ſhall now ſhew that Jeſus Chriſt is this laſt end, it will manifeſtly appear that he is the firſt Verity, the firſt Cauſe, and true God, and the ſupreme good in which moſt aſſuredly doth conſiſt the nature of the laſt end.

Which

Which that we may more clearly understand, we must consider, that when any nature is directed; or affected towards any thing as to its last end, that by the admixtion of another nature which distracts it, it may be so hindred, that it do not prosecute its end at all, or at least but very remisly; for example, a weight or ponderous body naturally tends downwards; and all gravity, or such bodies inclin'd by the form of their weight, or of their nature seek their centre; but a bird flies upwards, because it hath not onely the form of gravity, but also that of an animall or sensible living creature, and so this animall or living motion suspends, and hindring the naturall inclination of its gravity or weight, it mounts on high. In like manner, an insensible mixt body having much air and fire mixt with its earth sinks downward but slowly, but if there

be any weight which is meerly ponderous, it is vehemently carried downwards, unleſſe ſome violent obſtacle do hinder it; and the more purely ponderous it is, the more impetuouſly it is carried of its own nature to its centre: wherefore man conſiſting of a double nature, to wit, ſpirituall and corporall or ſenſible, although the underſtanding and will by their naturall motion tend towards Almighty God; yet by reaſon of the mixture of the ſenſible part, which for its naturall functions hath its ſenſible organs, it is diſturb'd with paſſions, and is more frequently diſtracted then otherwiſe it would naturally be; ſo that although the ſuperiour and ſpirituall part cannot be violently forced; yet either by errour, the underſtanding being ill informed, or by exceſſe of appetite the will, becoming ill affected, it is drawn to affect thoſe things which

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are very inordinate. Wherefore, if we intend to find out that in which the nature of the last end of man doth consist, it is necessary to seek it out of its motion, out of the vehemence of its love and ardent affections; but our nature consisting of both the rationall and sensible part, we must not consider the affections of them, who lead their lives like beasts, but of those onely which have reason alwayes for the guide of their actions which are onely worthy indeed of the true name of men: for if by the experiment of a ponderous body I intend to find out the centre of gravity, I must not consider it in the flight of birds, but by the motion of bodies which are meerly ponderous; but I have formerly proved, that there is no life more purely rationall, then that of Christians, therefore we shall come better to the knowledge of the last end

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of man, by the consideration of the love and affection of Christians, which truly and with all propriety are to be esteemed men, rather then by the inordinate appetites of others. But all Christians which live uprightly, with a most vehement affection, with a sweet concord and harmony, do bend their whole endeavours towards Christ crucified as towards their supreme and last end, for whose sake they esteem all other things as dregs and corruption, and therefore he is their last end, the true God, and supreme good of all mankind.

The last end of man is his compleat and absolute perfection, and therefore the nearer he is unto it, the more perfect he is, and the more he increases in perfection at the nearer distance he is from it, because to grow perfect is nothing else then to approach unto his last end; but there

there hath never any thing been found by coming near unto which by the approaches of the understanding and affection (we speak of them here and not of corporal approaches) humane nature hath so much profited as unto Christ crucified, insomuch that the more nigh it comes unto him, the more vehemently it affects him, and the more it becomes (as I have formerly shown) perfect in all morality; whence it plainly appears, that Christ is the last end of humane life. The desire of the last end is most naturall unto all things, and therefore every thing immoveably adheres unto its last end; for the last end in practicall things is like the first principles in things of speculation: Therefore as the first principles are ingrafted in our nature, so is the desire of our last end, and therefore it persists immoveable. Therefore when a man no way diverted

verted by his vicious appetites, doth rationally ſo firmly fix his affection upon ſome one thing ſo tenaciouſly, that he diſeſteems all others for it, and had rather loſe his life then forſake it, it is a ſign that he hath truly found out his laſt end; and hence it is, that although others have prefixed unto themſelves other laſt ends, yet we have ſeen none, or very few, except Chriſtians, who had rather loſe their lives then forſake thoſe ends of theirs; others undergo the extremity of all miſeries to conſerve their lives; for a man will give all he hath rather then loſe his life: but Chriſtians do not onely patiently, willingly and joyfully loſe all they have for Chriſt, but even they eſteem their lives as nothing for his ſake; and certainly if Chriſt were not the ſupreme Good, ſuch men of the greateſt wiſdome would not loſe their lives, being the moſt precious

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unto them, for the defence of the greatest of all errours.

Moreover things which are of the same nature being ordained for the same end, and in that regard being united, even as all ponderous bodies are in & tending to their centre, it is a most manifest argument seeing that there was nothing ever found in which men were so firmly united as in Christ crucified, that he is the last end of man; for those that believe in him are no lesse united and linked together, then all the parts of the earth being compacted into one solid globe are adherent to their centre: in the same manner all Christians which truly seek Christ, come to have bnt one heart and one soul in him, nay, the more they profit in their Faith, with greater delight and more ardent charity do they love one another: if therefore Christ were onely a man, and his Faith contain

contain a clandestine and impious fiction and forgery, it would not have taken such effect in so many thousands of men of severall conditions and qualities; because those who are onely tyed together by falsity are easily dissolved, nor could so many men grounding the union of their friendship on the false foundation of an errour, increase their love as the errour grew more enormious: spirituall delights they are the greater when our soul approaches nearer to its last end, and then they are most perfect when they more attain unto the end it self. If man therefore be somewhat delighted when he beholds his end imperfectly afar off, he will be farre more when he shall more perfectly possesse it; but the delight which Christians do enjoy of Christ, surpasseth all the exteriour pleasures of the senses or understanding; which appears out of three

three things: first, out of the incomparable constancy of Martyrs, of whom we reade innumerable, who with joy and mirth ran to their torments as to their nuptials, and triumphing in the midst of their sufferings have sung hymns unto God, as if they had been in some place of pleasure: which could no way happen; unlesse by the excesse of an immense delight, as if all their corporall senses were brought asleep, and Christ had defended them from all grief and terrour, which truly is a prerogative not granted to any other delight: for a grief (as experience teaches) disturbs the whole man, and expelling all pleasure puts him out of himself. Secondly, out of the infinite examples of the antient Monks, who, forsaking the world and wandring in the deserts and caves as the companions of wild beasts, in abstinence, fasting, and

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mortification, being in want of all things, and naked, have nevertheleſſe lived moſt joyfully with that unſpeakable content which they found in the contemplation of Divine things. And as yet we ſee the imitation and prints of their footſteps in the Religious men, who in great numbers (as I have ſaid) of their own accords ſubjecting themſelves to a willing ſervitude and to perpetuall clauſures, do moſt contentedly and joyfully paſſe their lives under a moſt exact obedience, as if they were ſet at liberty by being ſubjected under this yoke of Grace. Thirdly, out of the lives of moſt wiſe men, who flouriſhing with the erudition of all Sciences, having drunk of the ſacred fountain of holy Scriptures, and taſted the ſweetneſſe of Chriſt, have given over all other Sciences, being onely delighted with his Doctrine, unto

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which they have ſtuck ſo firmly, as if they could not be drawn from it, eſteeming all the wiſdome of Philoſophers and eloquence of the Oratours as dry apples and unſavoury, which I can teſtifie of very many, ſuch as I have known to have done ſo; but of theſe examples it is manifeſt, that the delights which proceed out of the Faith & Contemplation of Chriſt crucified do far ſurpaſs all others: we muſt therefore conclude that they proceed from the univerſal and ſupreme good, and chiefly becauſe the more near acceſs we have unto Chriſt by Faith and Love, the more are thoſe delights augmented.

And that we may briefly conclude with one argument, joyning in one all the proprieties of the laſt end; all the individuall or ſingular natures of the ſame kind (as I have ſaid) are ordained for the ſame laſt end, and all men do agree in the nature of their laſt

laſt end, though not in the thing in which that nature of the laſt end is contained, for this is that which we ſeek. The bliſſe therefore of man conſiſting in an act of our underſtanding, we muſt conclude, that that thing to which the nature of the laſt end agrees, is that in which all the moſt rationall and which are moſt pure of heart do agree in, and with all uniformity ſeek after it, and do immoveably inſiſt upon, and which they love above themſelves, and conſequently are moſt admirably delighted in it, and deriving from it the integrity of their lives, and the ſplendour of a celeſtiall clarity, and transformed with a Divine love, become even one and the ſame thing with it, and being in a manner raiſed above the world, valuing all terrene things as dirt, they take joy onely in thoſe Divine favours, and laſtly enjoy a moſt bleſſed quiet and

and peace of mind. But these things which are the conditions of the supreme Good were never found in any but in Christ crucified, and tha as he is true God, and therefore he is the supreme Good.

But why should I insist longer in these things which are of themselves manifest? For Good of its own nature desiring to communicate it self, the supreme Good must needs be that which most desires to communicate its virtue; but there is no communication of any other good found so great and ample as that which proceeds from Christ Jesus, after whose coming into the world and the propagation of his Faith, the whole world is purged of a dark and profound mist of sinnes and errours, and repleniſhed with all virtue and sanctimony of life, and so many graces

and

and favours are from thence granted and decreed unto the faithfull, that they are rightly esteemed happy and blessed upon earth; for if there can be any felicity or blisse upon earth, it is onely found in the Christians, which I have proved in the Epitome of the simplicity of a Christian life.

The incomparable Clemency and Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ declares the infinite abundance of his Goodnesse; because no malice of any hainous sinners and wickednesse are sufficient to make him deny or deferre his pardon to those that are truly repentant, but commonly he doth not cease to heap greater graces and gifts on those who return unto him. And it is a thing most experienced, that as often as any shall by sinne forsake him, that he is straight deprived of

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that sweetnesse and righteousnesse of life, so that he is drowned in terrene impurities and corruptions, and that he is tormented and vexed with intolerable cares; but assoon as he returns to his former state of recreation and quiet, he is, as it were, cured of the unquenchable thirst of some most malignant calenture.

CHAP. XVI.

The same proved out of the Power, Wisdome and Goodnesse of Christ altogether.

TO the end that those things which I have formerly said of the Power, Wisdom and Goodnesse of Christ may be more easily understood, let us here by way of Epilogue, make a recapitulation of them. We affirm that if Christ be not God, as he declared himself to be,

be, that he was the moſt arrogant and proud, the moſt abſurd and fooliſh of all men; but if he did not make himſelf God, but it was a fallacy of his Diſciples, and a humane fiction (as ſome fooliſh and doting men do avouch) how could ſo much Power, Wiſdome and Goodneſſe proceed out of the greateſt of all falſities and preſtigious impoſtures? For if he be not God, I know no other who may any way ſeem to be ſo; for if Almighty God do govern and conſerve theſe inferiour things by congruous means, we having proved that there is no means more perfect for a good and virtuous life then Chriſt, I do not ſee how we may chuſe, but either we muſt confeſſe that Chriſt is the true means of our bliſſe warranted by Almighty God unto mankind, or that we deny the divine Providence and Juſtice;

Justice; or that denying there is any God at all, we believe that all things happen by chance or fate: all which, besides the first which must necessarily be granted, are most absurd and fooliſh.

If there be any true Religion in the world, which by Arguments we have convinced and supposed as granted, who can deny, considering so many, and so forcible Reasons, that this must needs be the Christian Religion? There being no other so well grounded in Reason; so that if this be not true, it will force us to deny all Religion.

Also we know that no other Religion was ever so sharply impugn'd perpetually in all Ages, as the Christian; for other Religions, or rather fraudulent Superstitions, in a manner by the

ſame vanity by which they were ſet afoot, were deſtroyed and came to nothing; but the Chriſtian as the moſt pure gold, hath been refined in perpetuall flames of moſt cruel Perſecutions, which could not have happened, had any other been true, and this falſe.

It is moreover manifeſt, that the Chriſtian Religion never ſuffered or was perſecuted by virtuous and juſt men, but was alwayes held by them in great eſteem, reverence and veneration, having alwayes had continuall and inſatiable Warre, with flagitious, wicked and ſacrilegious Tyrants, and their father the Devil; and as many as have perſecuted it and its Miniſters, have alwayes been (as now-adayes alſo appears) of a moſt wicked condition, which never happened to any other Religion;

ligion; why therefore should we chuse to imitate wicked men, rather then the virtuous?

Further, there is no other Religion, unto which so many have hitherto been converted, and do daily come unto it upon this condition, that they know themselves not to be called to riches, honours or pleasures, (which in their Baptisme they oblige themselves to renounce) but unto contempt, abstinence, parsimony, contumelies, and (if occasion require it) unto the greatest and last extremity of all; no man therefore being in his right wits would be induced unto it by such promises and obligations, as we have seen so many thousands to be, unless the light of a most evident Verity did even pierce the hearts of mortalls.

The understanding therefore is constrained by these reasons and arguments, to believe this admirable Faith of Christ to be true; for if one, two or three, or a few agruments do not force an assent, yet all together if they be rightly considered, will not have lesse force then Mathematicall Demonstrations, or then if some of the dead were raised to life for the confirmation of this Verity.

Wherefore if the Christian Religion be true, all others are to be exploded as false; seeing the Christian doth most constantly avouch, that there is no salvation out of it; which is no more then reason; because our salvation consisting in the vision of God, unto which no man can attain without Celestiall and Divine favours, (as I have shewed before)

fore) no man can obtain it without Faith, the Scripture affirming, *Sine Fide impossibile est placere Deo*, That without Faith it is impossible to please God.

Nor is there left any sufficient cause of a just complaint or excuse for those who are born in strange and remote Countreys, which do not admit the Christian Religion; because if any one led by the light of reason, with a right intention and pure heart, do convert himself to the universall and common Parent of all men, and their Creatour, who appears plainly in the order and government of his Creatures, and which affords unto all the things which are necessary for them, and shall beseech him to shew his Verity unto him; he shall not (as I have touched in the beginning of this

Work according to the Christian Truth) be frustrate of his desire; but shall obtain the Light which is necessary to his salvation, either by internall inspirations, as did holy *Job*; or by Angels, as did *Cornelius* the Centurion; or as the Eunuch by *Philip*, that is, by some Apostolicall man.

FINIS.

THE FELICITY OF A Christian Life.



By *Hierome Savonarola.*

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THE
FELICITY
OF A
Christian Life.

The Felicity of a CHRISTIAN LIFE.

The I. *Conclusion.*

THat *among all Creatures of this world man onely worketh for some certain end.* That onely thing we say *worketh for its end*, which designeth unto it self some particular *end*, or reason of its working, and for the gaining thereof useth convenient means. Now this being impossible to be done without discourse of reason, and that being proper onely unto man, it followes

that man onely can be said properly *to work for some end*: And that Bruit Creatures are rather *Acted*, that is, carried by a swing of naturall propensity, *to their severall ends*, then that they *act* or move themselves.

The II. *Conclusion.*

That there is som ultimate or last end of humane life. In all things which are essentially ordinate one to another, we see that the first and principall being removed, all the rest which were subordinate unto it must faile: So the first mover or cause of all things being denyed, all inferiour Agents and second causes must of necessity cease. Now in all humane Actions there is a certain order observable, by which one action is subordinate and directed, as it were, unto another; as for example,

ample, in the building of an house, wee provide stones in order to reare the walls, the walls we intend for the house-sake, the house for our dwelling: But in things of this nature, that which first exciteth the mind of the Agent, and moves him to work is the end, or ayme which he desireth to compass by duemeans; if therefore there were not some *ultimate or last end*, beyond which nothing else could be intended or desired, the appetite of man would never be fixed, but perpetually desiring this thing for that things sake, and that thing again for some other, and so *in infinitum*: whereupon it would also follow, that there could be no Terme or period of his Action, which were absurd. Wee must therefore of necessity grant some *ultimate or last end* of the life of man, I mean which shall be simply and absolutely such, and from

which man (who is truly master of his own Actions) shall alwayes begin *to work*: and although it be not necessary, that at all times his mind be actually and distinctly upon that *end*, yet that habitually and virtually it should be, as upon the thing, which doth in the first place and more then any thing else move him to work: for so we see, all men are moved to do what they do, either to avoid misery, or to procure themselves happinesse, for as much as all men have this general end, as it were, ingrafted into their minds; and the difference that is among them is not, whither they should all desire to be happy or no, but in what Thing True happinesse doth consist.

The III. *Conclusion.*

That mans happinesse consisteth in the fruition or possession of his last end. Happiness is such a perfect good, as doth absolutely satisfie and fulfill the desire of man: for as much as we count him onely happy, who both enjoyeth whatsoever he desires, and can desire nothing more. As on the other side, every thing when it attaineth its proper end, is reconed perfect, because it doth all its other things onely in order to attaine *that*; when therefore *that* is obtained, it hath nothing else to desire, it is therefore *then* perfect: for that which is not perfect, is stil thirsting, still seeking or desiring to be perfected; But that which is acknowledged to be *already* perfect, must not in reason be supposed to desire perfection.

The IV. *Conclusion.*

Mans happines consisteth not in any outward goods. By *outward goods*, we understād Riches, Honours Dignities, Power, &c. in which we say *The happines of man consisteth not.* For proof whereof I could alledge an infinite number of Arguments, but the Thing it self being so clear as it is, and acknowledged by all, I shall insist onely upon some few. My first reason is, because happines is the supream or chief good of man, which admitteth not the least mixture or participation of evill, no more then the higheſt degree of heat doth any degree of cold: Blessednes therefore cannot consist in the fruition of *such goods*, which (as continuall experience tells us) do admit variety of evils, not of fortune only or chance, but (which

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is worst of all,) *the evils of sin*: for so we see, very wicked men have their share *in these goods*. Secondly, because Blessedness is a *Self-sufficeing good*, such as once being had, no other content can be wanting; but we see, though a man be never so well provided of *these goods*, yet 'tis possible he may be still in want of others no-less necessary; as a rich man is not alwayes wise, nor a man of Honour healthfull. Thirdly, because Blessedness is such a perfect good Thing, that from it no evill can proceed, which is not true of Riches, Honours, Power, &c. because by occasion of them, through the envy indeed and malice of others many mischiefs do arise, Murders, Parricides, Treasons, & what not? Fourthly, because the principles which dispose a man unto True happiness are intrinsecall or from within him, it being the end

whereunto he is naturally ordained and fitted; But unto *the goods* wee speak of, Riches, Honours, &c. a man is rather disposed by causes extrinsecall and from without him, yea many times, by meere chance, and therefore they are called commonly Goods of Fortune: it is cleat therefore, that in them Felicity cannot consist.

The V. *Conclusion.*

That mans happinesse consisteth not in the goods of the Body. By *goods of the body*, we mean the life of man, Health, Beauty, Youth, Strength, Courage, and the like, in all or in any of which, it is manifest, true happinesse cannot consist. Because first, this body is not made for it self, but for the soule; as the matter is alwayes for the forme, and not the forme for the matter. Therefore it

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is, that all *goods* belonging to the body, are ordained indeed for the soule as unto the proper end for which they are made. Besides, should the happinesse of man be placed in such *goods* as those, this absurdity would follow, namely that many even Bruit Beasts should participate of happinesse more then man; for certainly as to the fruition of such bodily goods, there be many beasts which do far excell man: as for example, in length of life the Elephant, in strength and courage the Lyon, the Stag in swiftnesse, the Eagle in sharp sightednesse, and in perfection and soundnesse of health almost all of them; for experience tels us, what a number of helps and how much art is requisite to support this fraile carcase of ours, more then of any other kind of creatures; Therefore 'tis impossible true felicity should be found in *it*.

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The VI. Conclusion.

NEither doth it consist in the goods, that is to say, in the pleasures & satisfactions of the sensitive part of the soul. Every thing the nearer it approacheth to its proper end, the perfecter it growes (for its end is its perfection) if therefore Blessednes consisted in those sensitive delights, A man should become so much the more perfect, by how much he lived more sensually, and gave himself up to all kind of Luxury and voluptuousnes; that is, he should be so much the more a man, by how much he lived more like a beast: which is very absurd. And so againe (as was touched in the precedent Conclusion) Beasts also would be found capable of happines, as well as men, yea rather of a more perfect happines then man; for as much as they have

have no fear of death, no apprehension of future miseries, no knowledge of God, no feare of Judgement, no Lawes, no Shame, no repugnance of flesh and spirit; in brief they have nothing, which can either abate the sense, or restraine the use of their present pleasures: if therefore the Felicity of man did consist in the pleasures of sense, we should all desire to be metamorphiz'd and become Beasts: why? because Beasts (upon this supposition) are more happy then men. But this was confessed to be absurd before.

The VII. *Conclusion.*

That the happiness of man consists in such goods, as pertain unto the Intellectuall or superiour *part of the soule.* For as the body is ordained for the soule, so of the soule the vegetative or lowest part is ordained for

for the Sensitive, and the Sensitive for the Intellectuall. Seeing therefore that the Intellect or Rationall part of the Soul, is (as it were) the *end* of the *Body*, and the thing whereunto both *it*, and also the inferiour parts of the soul be subordinate and directed: it is manifest, that in the *Act* or exercise of this Intellect, and in the *goods*, that is to say, in the perfections thereto properly belonging, the finall happinesse of man doth consist. Besides, seeing that happinesse belongs onely to a perfect man, and that the perfection of man as man, consisteth in such goods as belong either to his understanding or will; it is hence also manifest, that in such manner of goods as are Intellectuall and rationall, his proper happinesse consisteth.

The VIII. Conclusion.

But yet this happinesse of man doth not consist in any created good, although intellectuall. For, as we said before, Blessednesse is such a perfect good, as doth totally satisfie or fulfill the appetite; for otherwise it could not be the *ultimate or last end*, supposing there remained any thing else further to be desired. Now the object of the will, (that is, of the appetite of man as man) is *good in its latitude*, or the *universall good*. For we find, that as the understanding of man comprehends an infinitie of particular *verities*; that is to say, it never comprehendeth actually so many, but it is still apt and capable to comprehend more successively even *in infinitum*; so also we find, that the will of man is as able to desire and effect an infinity

ty of particular *goods*; that is to say, that *it* also never actually desireth so many, but it is still ready to accept and embrace more, whensoever offered, and this successively *in infinitum*, and that therefore it can never be fully satisfied, untill it attains to some *universall or infinite good*; which is not to be found in any created Thing: for the goodnesse of every Thing created, is at best but derivative, particular, and finite; therefore in no *created good* can the Felicity of man consist.

The IX. *Conclusion.*

That the Happinesse of man consisteth solely in the contemplation and fruition of God. We said before, that the understanding of man resteth not, that is, is not satisfied in the knowledge of *particular verities*, nor his will in the fruition of par-

particular goods. The *last end* therefore of them both must be *Truth and Goodnesse universall*, or in its full latitude, which God onely is: therefore in the Contemplation and Fruition of God alone the Beatitude of man consisteth. Besides, man being what he is, *viz.* a creature naturally desirous to know, and that our knowledge of every particular thing seems then to be compleat, when we comprehend its proper and true cause; hence it follows, that whensoever we observe any thing *to be*, that is to say, any effect; we instantly, yea naturally desire to know its cause, why, what, or whence it is. Now all things, beside God, appear unto us, and in truth are, but *effects* of some other cause; and therefore, whatsoever a man knows beside God, he knows it either perfectly or imperfectly: if imperfectly, his desire is never satisfied, untill he attains

tains perfect knowledge thereof (for that is naturall, *viz.* for every thing that is imperfect to desire perfection) and seeing that Felicity, as we have said, is the perfection of man, and the full satisfaction of his Intellectuall appetite; it is manifest, that by such imperfect knowledge of any thing he cannot become happy: But if he knows the thing perfectly, suppose it be some one singular, or many, yea perhaps all particular things that be, yet he cannot but apprehend them still as *effects*, that is, as depending (in their very beings) upon some other cause. Seeing therefore, as we said, that man observing the effect, doth naturally desire to know the cause; it is manifest, that this appetite of his cannot be compleatly satisfied with the knowledge even of all particular things that be, but still it will be endeavouring and desiring to see

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also the cause of them all; and that so much the more earnestly, by how much it finds the effects themselves to be more excellent; or that it self apprehends them more perfectly: for so it is alwayes seen, that every naturall motion, the nearer it draws to its period or proper term, the stronger and stronger it grows. In the sole knowledge therefore and fruition of God (who is the universall and first cause of all Things) doth mans Blessednesse consist: according as S. *Augustine* hath excellently well observed, *Thou hast made us O Lord* (saith he,) *for thy self, and our heart is restlesse and unquiet, untill it findeth its repose in Thee.*

The X. *Conclusion.*

That this Beatitude formally, and as it were in actu primo, *consisteth*

eth in the understanding or seeing of God, as he is; but exercitatively, operatively, and as in actu secundo, *in the will, or in that ineffable pleasure and delight which is enjoyed by the knowledge and contemplation of him.* The Act of the will alwayes presupposeth the Act of the understanding, because the object thereof is alwayes some *known or imaginary good.* Seeing therefore that Beatitude formally and in its own nature is nothing else but the attaining of our last end, as soon as ever a man attains that he is happy. But man attaineth his last end (which is God) so soon as ever he *sees*, that is, perfectly knows him. Therefore *in the knowledge*, and *by the knowledge* of his last end, man becomes *essentially* happy. But yet because this knowledge or contemplation of the Divine Majesty is inseparably accompanied with a certain infinite and ineffable

effable joy or pleasure conceived upon that sight, and by which the sight or contemplation it self seems to be perfected, therfore we say that in regard of *operation* or the exercise of Beatitude, that it is compleated in the *will*, which with an infinite delight doth embrace that *good sight*, and consent to be absorpt and drowned in the glorious Abyss thereof to all Eternity. As in like manner we say of man, that he consists *essentially* in the union of a rationall Soul with the body, but yet that he is perfected in regard of operations by such accidents as do either necessarily or contingently follow that union: to wch sense the Philosopher also saith, *Delight hath the same relation to Felicity, which Beauty hath to youth.*

The

The XI. *Conclusion*

That perfect Blessednesse cannot be attained in this life. First, because in this life we have no immediate knowledge of God, we see him not but by and through the creatures, and as it were, in such a glasse, as the Phantasie or some inferiour faculty of our soul is able to present unto us: which manner of knowledge being so imperfect, the soul of man finds no satisfaction therein, that is to say, no Beatitude, no *full content*. Secondly, because, as *Boetius* saith, Blessednesse is a state consummate, or perfected with a concurrence of *all good*; but in this mortall life, there never was seen, (nor ever shall be) such a generall confluence of *All Good Things* upon any one man, as that nothing should be wanting either to his body, or to his

his soul: especially seing that Immortality (the Crown of the Bodies perfections) cannot possibly be attained here, no more then the certain hour of a mans death can be foreseen; and that knowledge (which is the prerogative royall of the soul) is found but by very few, and that never absolutely clear in this life, never but darkened and eclipsed with a multitude of errours. Not to speak of those inferiour and lesse valuable goods of fortune and the body, health, wealth, &c. the least of which yet being wanting doth infinitely disturb our union with God, and dayly, yea hourly deject us from that state, wherein True Felicity consists.

The XII. Conclusion.

Yet notwithstanding a certain Inchoate Felicity (or as twere the First Fruits

Fruits of happineſſe) *may be had in this life.* In the heart of man we may conceive a double reſt, *viz.* either of the appetite it ſelf, or of the motions and ſtirrings of the appetite. The former, which is indeed a beginning of happineſſe, a man may, perhaps perfectly, obtain in this life; for it is nothing elſe, but the determining or ſettling of our deſire upon that object, which is in Truth our laſt end. 'Tis true, in a generall notion all men do naturally deſire to be happy (becauſe 'tis naturall for every thing to deſire at leaſt that perfection which is proper to his kind,) yet in particular, or in regard to their indeavours or motions to attain happineſſe, they do as generally miſtake, few of them knowing where to find it, or in what Thing it conſiſts: and therefore we ſee their deſires thereof are commonly unequall, irregular, and reſtleſſe.

But

But when once a man hath found, that his happineſſe conſiſteth in the Contemplation or knowledge of God, and is reſolved to make it his chief buſineſs, ſtudy, and care to advance himſelf therein, his appetite becomes in that reſpect *ſatisfied and quiet*: But yet again, becauſe this knowledge of God is not perfect in this life, but rather in continuall advancement towards perfection; therefore we ſay in that ſecond ſenſe, that the appetite is *not ſatisfied*, that is to ſay, not the motions and ſtirrings thereof, which indeed never ceaſe, but are continually labouring and endeavouring after greater perfection in that Contemplation; and this ſo much the more inceſſantly and ſtrongly, by how much a man comes nearer to perfect Beatitude, and receives, as it were beforehand, ſome glimpſes and Irradiations thereof. And this is that we call *Fe-*

licity Inchoate or in its First-fruits.

The XIII. *Conclusion.*

That Christians have this Felicity Inchoate in a greater measure, then the best of Philosophers. The reason is, because the Contemplation and Fruition of God, which good Christians have, are in themselves greater and more perfect, then those which the most excellent Philosophers could ever arrive unto. By what I have elsewhere said, it is manifest, that a Christians life is not founded upon any naturall principle either within or without man, but in something supernaturall, that is to say, in the Grace of God, by which also he is elevated unto a participation of the Divine nature. Seeing therefore that the operation of every thing followeth its Essence, (for every thing worketh, so far as it

can, agreeably to its own nature,) by how much the nature or essence of any thing is more perfect, by so much perfecter also is it in its operation or working: But Grace is a thing of a much nobler and more perfect essence then nature; and therefore the operations or effects wch proceed from thence, must needs excell those of nature. And seeing again that by how much the operation or Action of any Thing is more perfect, by so much a greater and more perfect delight is conceived thereupon, it must needs follow, that those spirituall Contentments and Gusts which good Christians have with God, and in God, do infinitely excel those of philosophers, which at best are but naturall, and such as the principle is from whence they proceed. Besides, seeing that happinesse consisteth in the Contemplation of God, the greater knowledge a man hath

of God, the greater, that is, the more perfect is his Contemplation and Fruition of him: But this is certain that Christians have greater knowledge of God, then philosophers; as well in regard of the light of Grace, which perfects that of nature, and reveals unto Christians many excellent mysteries altogether unknown to philosophers; as also in regard of that Purity of heart, which, as we have shewed elsewhere, true Christians do injoy in a more excellent measure then others: The delights therefore which Christians injoy in their Contemplation of God are much greater in themselves and more perfect, then those which the best of philosophers could have. And seeing that this *happinesse Inchoate*, which we speak of, doth consist in the Contemplation and Fruition of God which is attainable in this life, it follows, that it is more perfectly attained

ained by Christians then philosophers. Lastly, this *happinesse Inchoate* is so much greater and more perfect, by how much it cometh nearer to Felicity consummate, or that of the next life: But the Felicity of Christians, which is here begun, cometh much nearer to Felicity Consummate, then that of philosophers; for as much as no man shall ever actually attain heaven but by Grace, (which the philosophers neither had nor knew;) it is manifest therefore, that true Christians are more justly esteemed happy in this world, then philosophers: and if then they, much more then any other sort of men.

The XIIII *Conclusion.*

THat the delights which good Christians find in the Contemplation of God, do surpasse all the delights of this world, whither sensitive or intellectuall. Three things com-

monly concurre to the causing of delight, First the object, or presence of some good; Secondly the subject or Thing whereto that good is present; Thirdly the union or Conjunction of these Two together, which is alwayes accompanied with some knowledge, or reflexion of the faculty upon its proper Act; as for example, in delights of the taste, there is required some pleasant meat perhaps or such like thing, Secondly the organ or subject of taste rightly disposed, Thirdly union of these, that is, application of meat to the palate, together with attention of the mind to what is done; for indeed without this nothing is done: For should the meat be never so delicious in it self, yet if it were put into the mouth of a man asleep, certainly he would be little affected with it, for no sensation would be. We are therefore in the first place to observe, that the Good

which

which delighteth us, the perfecter it is in it self, the greater delight it causeth: now 'tis certain, that Intellectuall natures are much more perfect, then things sensitive; and that the first verity is infinitely more perfect then all the rest; it is therefore most able and fit to cause the greatest delectations. We are to observe in the second place, that the faculty likewise, by how much it is more exquisite and perfect, so much the greater delectation is conceived in the work thereof: for the quality of delight follows immediately that of operation; therefore the more perfect operation is, the perfecter is the delight; but as we said, the perfecter the faculty be, the perfecter is also the operation: now of the same faculty, that is to be accounted the more perfect operation, which doth more perfectly comprehend and reach its object. Seeing therefore the under-

ſtanding is a more exquiſite faculty then ſenſe, the operation therof muſt needs be more perfect then that of ſenſe, and conſequently a greater delight muſt be had in the Acts thereof, then in the Acts of ſenſe. But now among all the Acts which the underſtanding exerciſeth, incomparably the moſt perfect is the Contemplation of the firſt verity; in that Contemplation therefore the moſt perfect delight is found. Thirdly, we are to conſider, that the nearer or more intimate the union of the object and faculty is, the greater alſo in that reſpect is the delight; But the object of the underſtanding is far more intimately united unto the faculty Intellective, then the object of ſenſe is to the ſenſe; for alwayes ſpirituall things do more ſtrongly and vehemently unite, then corporall, and eſpecially God, or the firſt verity, whoſe union with all things is in-

inexplicably intimate; therefore of necessity by the union of God unto the understanding, that is, by Contemplation of God the greatest delight is obtained. We see therefore both in regard of the nature and perfection of the object it self, as also of the faculty, and union of both, that the delights which follow the Act of the ũderstanding do infinitely excell those which follow the operations of sense, and that those which follow upon the Contemplation of God Almighty are incomparably greatest of all. Now seeing that God is more perfectly understood by Christians, then by any other sort of men, yea then by the most excellent philosophers themselves, as before we have shewen; and that the naturall light of their understanding is by the light of grace infinitely perfected, and that the union of God with the soul, and of the soul with

God through the means of Grace is the most admirable of all unions, it follows, as we said, as well from the nature of the object it self, as of the faculty & union both, that the delights, wch Christians have in the Contemplation of God, do infinitely surpasse the delights of this world not onely sensitive but Intellectuall also. Moreover, seeing that in every particular sort of Things there may be observed some one that is chief, principall, and most excellent in that kind, and as it were the measure and rule of the rest, by approximation whereunto the rest are judged to be more or less perfect in that kind; as for example, in the Classis or prædicament of hot Things Fire is reconed to be supream, and as it were the standard of all other heats, every thing being judged to be so much the hotter, by how much it cometh nearer to the degree of fire: seeing therefore that

God

God Almighty in the order of blessed and Glorious objects is incomparably supreme and more excellent then all others; Those Things which approach neareſt to the perfections of God, or are moſt like him, muſt needs be not onely more perfect in themſelves, but alſo more capable of the moſt raviſhing contentments: but 'tis certain that the ũderſtanding of man or his Intellective part, cometh nearer unto a likeneſſe with the divine nature then the ſenſitive, and therefore the delights of that muſt be greater then thoſe of ſenſe; and ſeeing that the ſoul of a Chriſtian, by means of Grace & other ſupernaturall priviledges beſtowed on her, comes neater unto God, then any other which is not in Grace, as is manifeſt by what we have elſwhere ſaid, it follows, that the True Chriſtian doth more participate of divine pleaſures then any man whatſoever. But this

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is to be understood principally of perfect Christians: for we confesse such as be imperfect do meet with many impediments, by which their Contemplation of Divine Things is obstructed and troubled, and consequently the delights, wch otherwise they might receive, and which perfect men certainly do receive in such Contemplations, sometimes is utterly lost, alwayes much abated: yet not withstanding even that very little, which they do receive, through the fervour of Charity or divine Love, becomes so sweet and pleasant to them, that for it alone they do absolutely despise all the contentments of this world, saying with the Prophet *Better is one day in thy Courts, then a Thousand elswhere.* Whence also it follows, that seeing all true Christians more or lesse do avoid the pleasures of this world, and with studious affection at least pretend

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unto divine Contemplation, yea even when their taſt and feelings of God are but yet imperfect; it follows, I ſay, that the leaſt delight proceeding in this manner from God doth infinitely ſurpaſſe the greateſt of the world, according as one ſervant of God hath told us in the name of all the reſt: *my ſoul*, ſaith he upon a time, *refuſed to be comforted: I did but think upon God; and I was drowned in delight.* And although this may ſeem incredible to carnall men, yet we ought not to wonder, for ſuch have not the taſt of the ſpirit. But *be waſhed, O ye ſinners, and make you clean: Away with your evil deviſes; ceaſe to do perverſly, learn to do well. Come, diſprove me if you can: or, if you cannot; Confeſſe, that the things which we preach unto you are True.*

The XV. Conclusion.

THat Christians in the Contemplation of Christ crucified also do find inestimable delectations. We come to the knowledge of Invisible things in this life by the means of things visible; because, as philosophy teacheth, our understanding naturally follows the phantasie, that is, apprehends nothing, but what is prepared, as it were, and offered to her from thence. Now there is no visible object in the world which can more effectually lead us into the knowledge and contemplation of divine things, then the Consideration of Christ crucified, proceeding from a lively Faith. Because indeed nothing can more effectually declare the goodnesse and inestimable charity of God towards man. For seeing, that *to be loved* is a thing of it

self

self very agreeable to nature, *to be beloved* in this manner of God, that is, unto so high a pitch, that he should vouchsafe to be crucified himself for us, who can think, but that it is a pleasure of all pleasures to conceive? Now such a love of God towards us, doth the consideration of Christ crucified present unto our minds, and therefore of necessity must cause in them ineffable delectations. Besides, hope of Good is a thing which naturally causeth delight, as making in some sort the good we hope for, present to us: and the greater and more certain the good is which we hope, so much the greater and more perfect delight is caused. But there can be no greater good imagined, then that which Christians hope for by the Passion; nor more certain, for as much as they are assured thereof by God himself, who for that intent, name-

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ly that he might make it sure to them, was Crucified: Therefore from such hope, so great, so sure, Christians cannot but receive singular Consolation. Thirdly, Admiration is naturally accompanied with delight, for as much as he which wonders at any thing is commonly possessed also with some great desire and hope to know what the matter is, at which he finds himself to wonder. Now what more admirable, yea astonishing, then that God Almighty should be made man, and dye upon a Gibbet to save men? Seeing therefore that Christians in the Contemplation of Christs Passion do consider this, and also conceive most firm hope, to attain one day unto an absolute assurance and sight of so rare a mystery, how can they be otherwise affected then with excesse of delight? Fourthly, seeing God Al-

Almighty is so infinitely perfect and great, it was not possible, that by any one creature he could be competently expressed, but it seemed necessary to his Divine wisdome to create an Universe of Creatures, that is, this whole world, in the latitude and variety whereof the Spirit of man might have scope enough, and find infinite examples, wherein to contemplate, even unto ravishment, the singularities of his perfection. And seeing in like manner that the goodnesse of the same God our blessed Saviour doth as infinitely surpasse all humane understanding, not one onely, or some few, but a million, a numberlesse multitude, of divine, gracious, and stupendious works were requisite by him also to be done; but to expresse it in some part, in the meditation of which our souls are fed, yea glutted as it were, with admiration and con-

content: Amongst which none bearing more lively or legible Characters of his Love, then that of his Passion; it follows that in his Passion, and the Contemplation thereof, greatest content must be found: as experience also proveth in an infinite number of Christians, who by their actions have more then sufficiently shewen the sense they have had of the Crosse of our Saviour. It were an endlesse labour to go about to expresse them, the infinite variety, the multitude and excesse of those joyes, which the servants of God have tasted from time to time, and do daily taste in this kind: The lives, yea, the deaths of those ancient Christians do abundantly testifie how great they were; who in infinite multitudes of both sexes, and of all Conditions, men and women, for the name and for the love of this cruci-

crucified Jesus, not onely patiently endured all sorts of persecutions and affliction, but even exulted and leapt for joy in the midst of their tortures, dying rather through the extremity of their delights, then pain. The number of Monks and other solitary persons is infinite, who in all times for the love of Jesus have withdrawn themselves from the world, and made choice to live in wildernesses and caves of the earth, poor, naked, destitute of all things, save the comforts of divine Love, onely to attend unto this Contemplation. Lastly the learnedest Doctours, and wisest men of the world, how often have they abandoned not onely the pleasures and vanities of the world, (which were scarce worthy of them) but even their most pleasing and most commendable Studies, yea their own selves also, for the love and Contemplation of this Jesus? *The*

The XVI Conclusion.

That the holy Scriptures do exceedingly elevate the mind of good Christians unto these Contemplations. First, because All Scripture generally doth relate unto Christ crucified, according to that of the Apostle. *The end* or scope *of the law is Christ.* And for as much as writing, in its own nature, is but the sign of words spoken, as speech is of conceptions or thoughts; because our thoughts do alwayes proceed from some interiour light or Illustration of the mind, by how much that light is greater and more excellent, so much the greater also and more perfect must the Conceptions be, and the speech consequently more powerfull, and the writing, wherein that speech is represented more admirable and profound. Now light

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supernaturall is alwayes greater and more perfect then naturall; And seeing also that there be severall degrees in that light, it cannot be doubted, but the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists, had the greatest measures thereof, as being the men whom Almighty God was pleased so singularly to Illuminate, as that neither in writing nor preaching they could so mistake, as to deliver falsehood for truth: Therfore also were their meditations, their speech and all expressions of themselves alwayes profound, powerfull, and serious: He therefore that presumeth to understand their writings without supernaturall Illustration, is as wise as he that would have a bird to fly without wings: of which sort yet there are some in the world, viz. certain Philosophers, Rhetoricians, Grammarians, Poets of this age, who not knowing or not considering

dering the profundity of sacred Scriptures, do venture upon them with the same temerity, as they do upon *Tully*, *Hortensius* or some other of their windy Authours; and perhaps not finding in them those flashes of elegance, or subtilty, to which themselves are accustomed, presently they fall to slight and think meanly of them, imagining (weak men) nothing to be so sublime as *Plato*'s Philosophy, no eloquence comparable to some piece of *Cicero*. But *he which dwelleth in heaven, shall* (one day) *laugh these men to scorn, yea our Lord shall have them in derision. For* indeed, *the naturall man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they seem foolishnesse unto him, neither can he understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.* But the true Christian, the man that hath supernaturall light in him, shall discern them:

them: and if with pure intention and an humble heart he set himself to the reading of holy Scriptures, meditating or considering well what he reades, and begging the grace of divine illumination, with constancy and perseverance, from God; This man, I say, shall doubtlesse be wonderfully elevated by reading, and fitted for divine favours, and shall find those endlesse and immortall pleasures in them, which do incomparably exceed the greatest of this world. For this is certain, every Thing is best delighted with that which is connaturall unto it, as different humours do alwayes affect different recreations, according to that of the Poet ——

——*Trahit sua quemque voluptas.* *Every man hath his own fancy.* But unto him that is indued with supernaturall light, the most naturall, that is, most agreeable study of all is certainly

tainly the ſtudy of holy Scriptures, which proceeded from that ſame fountain of light. Therefore alſo in the reading and contemplation of them the true Chriſtian finds his greateſt content. Beſides, every Thing is beſt pleaſed in ſuch kind of Action as is moſt proper for it ſelf; But there is nothing more proper for a Chriſtian then the Contemplation of Chriſt crucified by the ſtudy of Scripture: For ſhould he go about to conceive or meditate of him meerly according to naturall reaſon, or the principles of Philoſophy, neglecting Scripture, he would certainly find leſſe proficiency, and perhaps run himſelf into ſome hazard of dangerous errour: for ſuch contemplation were purely naturall, imperfect, and by which he ſhould never attain unto the myſteries of Faith: of which thing we have examples in our modern Divines, who

who seeming to give themselves wholly to Aristotle and the study of Philosophy are become generally lesse devout, lesse Contemplative then the meanest of the people. Besides, Truth which is the object of understanding, the higher it is the greater delight it causeth in the acquisition; now the verityes of holy Scripture are the most high and mysterious of all other, because they treat principally of such things as be undiscernable by naturall light. Again in regard of the inconstancy of mans nature, which is neuer long delighted with the same thing, but alwayes affects variety and change of pleasure, the sacred Scriptures do become a most agreeable exercise to our spirit. For how admirable, how ravishing is that variety we meet with in them, of Histories, of sensts, of Types, of Figures? and yet a most exquisite harmony between

them all, All the parts, All the Books of the Old and New Testament, exactly consenting in one, and pointing unto the same generall and supream verity or end, which is the love of God and our neighbour: of which while they treat sometime historically and plainly, sometime more mystically and profoundly, they do as it were, present a nose-gay of celestiall and various flowers unto our soul, which continually changing, do yet most constantly encrease spirituall content: We conclude therefore, that in the reading and meditation of holy Scripture most exquisite delights be found.

The XVII. Conclusion.

THat a good Christian, the more simply, that is to say, sincerely he liveth, the greater consolation he hath from God, from our Lord Jesus Christ, and from the study of holy Scriptures. This is true, whither we speak of simplicity only Interiour, or that of the heart; for the understanding or mind of man together with his affections, the more pure and sincere they be, so much the more do they render him fit and capable of divine Illustrations: For this simplicity of heart doth indeed require that we be altogether purged from terrene and grosse affections, to the end that a mans spirit might be intirely set upon God, and by this simplicity or purity as much as may be, made like unto him. It is true also, in regard of simplicity

exteriour, or that which consisteth in the Actions and conversation of men, as is manifest: For to contemplate well divine mysteries, it is necessary that the heart of man be in great rest, and very well composed in it self; and therefore we see commonly, that those who desire to partake of divine Illuminations, do retire themselves, as much as may be, from the noyse and disturbances of the world, as of the Spouse in the Canticles it is said, *I will lead her into the wildernesse*, saith he, that is, into solitude, and *there will I speak to her heart*. And in an other place, *He shall sit alone, and keep silence, because*, by so doing, *he shall be lifted up above himself*. And contrariwise we see, the richer a man is, and more incombred with worldly affairs, the lesse is he affected unto contemplation; but where a mans outward affairs are few or

none

none, there is alwayes lesse distraction of mind. Therefore our holy Fathers and predecessours in the Contemplative life, were alwayes wont to renounce their affairs of the world, and retire themselves into Solitude, thereby more promptly and readily to attend Divine Meditations. Every man therefore in his particular degree and quality shall find, the more simply and uprightly he indeavours to live, the greater Consolations he shall receive from God and from Christ.

The XVIII. Conclusion.

That the Christian life is the onely Blessed life. Never was there, nor ever shall be found out any kind of life more happy then that, because none better. If therefore the life of any men may be accounted happy in this world, it is certainly that of

Christians. For if we observe, it comprehendeth all those perfections, wherein the Philosophers anciently placed happinesse, and so hath whatsoever they judged good and desireable: as for example, if we place happinesse, as some of them did, in the Contemplation of God and things Divine, there is none more excellent and perfect then those which the Christian life affordeth. If we place it in morall vertue, and in the life active, that is, in good government of our selves and others, there is no better to be desired by man, then that which Christian Philosophy prescribeth. If we place it in riches, honours, powers, dignities, or other goods of the body, (though this may seem hardest) yet the Christian life is not altogether uncapable of these, and hath no absolute repugnance to them: for we say, Whatsoever perfection appears

pears in the effect, is some way or other in the cause; as the Sunne, which causeth heat in all inferiour bodies, is it self also, at least virtually hot: it is not indeed necessary, the cause should contain every particular perfection of the effect formally and in the same manner as the effect doth; it sufficeth, that it be contained *eminently*, as we say, or by some more excellent way, then it is in the effect. So in proportion we also say, that the Christian life doth comprehend, yea afford all those goods which Secular men do so much desire, though not in such manner as they commonly affect and hunt after them, but in a better, that is, in a due and congruous subordination of them unto superiour goods. For the Christian life, being as it is a life of wisdome, a life of most perfect prudence and direction, when we see that the things

which the world ſo much admireth, riches, honours, pleaſures, *&c.* are by them (*viz.* good Chriſtians) in a manner neglected, we cannot but conclude that they find themſelves ſatisfied otherwiſe; that is, poſſeſſed of riches, honours, pleaſures *&c.* of a more noble and more excellent nature then thoſe be, which they ſeem to deſpiſe. For having the grace of God, and our Saviour Chriſt himſelf *dwelling in them by Faith*, they conceive themſelves thereby in poſſeſſion of ſo great a good, that in compariſon thereof, there is little elſe worthy of their deſires. They have alſo hereby an aſſured hope to recover in the Reſurrection, whatſoever Beauty or other ornaments of the body, here they might ſeem to want, yea in that degree of excellency and glory, which the heart of man cannot now conceive, and to injoy with Chriſt

Christ for ever, that life and endlesse felicity, of which the Apostle speaketh, *Eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive, what Things God hath prepared for them that love him.* And hence we observe, that good Christians be generally of a chearfull and pleasing Conversation, not seeming either to desire, or to fear any thing overmuch in this world, and to be as it were, out of the Gun-shot of inordinate sorrow; according as it is written, *Nothing shall grieve the Just man of whatsoever happeneth unto him*; and as it was said of the Apostles of our Saviour, *They went from the Councell rejoycing, that they were held worthy to suffer reproch for the name of Christ.*

The XI. X. Conclusion.

THat it is no hard matter to attain Christian life, and therein by Gods help to persevere unto the end. The principall thing required thereto is the *grace of God*, that *grace* I mean, which is not only a meer gift of God, or *freely given*, but that which maketh a man *formally gracious with God*, or just. This indeed is onely to be had from God, but he, through his Infinite and Immense Goodnesse being so ready and inclined to give it unto them that ask, in that respect there is no difficulty to attain Christian life. *For if he spared not his own Sonne*, as the Apostle argueth, *but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us*, and that easily, *all Things?* There is also required some disposition

sition on our part to receive the grace of God, which yet renders not the attaining of Christian life, nor perseverance therein through Grace, difficult or hard. For can it be hard for a man to do that which is in his own power? Can it be hard for a man to do that which natural reason tells him is best, is for his own good, and in his own election? Let a man therefore but observe three precepts, and he shall find the attaining and perseverance in Christian life by Gods grace, easie. The first is, *That he have continuall Thoughts and reflexions upon the miseries of Humane life, and especially upon the hour and issues of his death.* For seeing that man dyeth, as all other creatures do, he ought often thus to think and reason with himself; To what purpose do I thus labour? What good

good do all these Riches and Honours do me? I am sure to dye and leave them all. I am sure to dye, yet the hour and time of my death is most uncertain. What if I dye to day? as 'tis possible enough, what good would it then do me, to have had the whole world at command? Or thus: If the condition of man and beast be alike (as in death we seem,) truly we men are a great deal more unhappy then they: for unto bruit beasts Nature it self provideth a convenient food, convenient cloathing, houses, and other necessaries for their life, which we men have not, but with a great deal of labour and pains. Beasts are satisfied with that onely which is present, never taking care for the future, as man doth, who is never contented with what he hath, but still desiring insatiably more, and vexed with a Million

of

of cares for that which is to come. Beasts are not subject to half those infirmities of body which man is; sickness, weakness, weariness, &c. and for those of the mind, tribulations, anxieties, distresses, which we suffer in infinite variety every day, they know them not. Beasts are content with a little, their desire is presently satisfied with but a small provision; but the desires of man are without end; his heart is restless, inscrutably perverse and miserable with all. Lastly, beasts have no Thoughts of any future life, nor of the Immortality of Soul, about which men are extreamly perplexed, almost in continuall dread and apprehensions of going, after all the troubles and toylings of this life, unto pains eternall. If therefore our soul be not indeed Immortall, there is no creature so miserable

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as man: But if it be Immortall, then certainly our finall rest is not here, but must be sought in some other life. And seeing that it were an absurd thing to imagine that man, whom both God and nature have made the most noble and most excellent of all other Creatures, should yet be found to be of them all the most miserable, we must confesse some other happiness reserved for him, or else deny the providence of God over his works. For seeing that in the world many Things daily appear new, which were not before, and that nothing can possibly make it self, or give Being to it self; it cannot be doubted but that every Thing in the world is made to be, by something else which was before it; unlesse we will be such fools, as to say, All things come to passe by chance, that is by nothing (for chance is nothing but our

ignorance

ignorance or non-provision of the true cause) a paradox sufficiently confuted by the very order of the universe, and that wonderfull regularity which is observed yea sensible in all the proceedings of nature. And seeing again, that in causes subordinate, we may not run from one to another *in infinitum*, we must pitch at last upon some one, which shall be the first and generall cause of all; and This is confessed to be God: whence also we see, that without any discourse of Argument, but by meer instinct of nature men generally acknowledge God, and also worship him in some way or other: nor was there ever man found that could settle in the opinion that *There were no God*. And that God hath providence over the world, the course of nature, as we said even now, sufficiently sheweth, and the Philosophers themselves confesse, saying, that *the work*

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of nature is the work of an Intellect which erreth not. And although it hath come in dispute among them, whither God hath providence over humane affairs (perhaps in regard of the great irregularities and deviations which seem to be in them, more then in other things) yet certainly it cannot be denied by any wise man, but that he hath over them, and over all, and over the least, as much as over the greatest. Because Providence in every Thing is so much the more perfect and more excellent, by how much it further extends it self and taketh care of more Things; seeing then that the Providence of God must be acknowledged the most perfect of all, it must also of necessity extend it self to all Things, it must leave nothing unprovided for, it must overpasse nothing. We observe also in all causes a naturall and vehement inclination, as it were

to govern and perfect their effects; as for example, in bruit beasts, what an admirable and great care have they of their young ones? Seeing therefore that whatsoever good is in the second causes, they have it from the first, to which they do all naturally desire, so much as may be, to assimilate themselves, it is manifest that the first and generall cause of all things (as it were a Common Parent) must have a great and exact care over all particular effects, seeing he is the cause of all. Beside, if God hath not providence over humane affairs, what is the reason? is it because he cannot? or because he knows not how to govern them? or lastly because he will not? none of these can be imagined of God. For shall we think of God, that he cannot, or knoweth not how to execute that, which man both knoweth and also is able to do? and if but a good

good man, who hath ability and skill to order affairs, is alſo ever willing of his own part to do it, ſhall we think of God, who is moſt able, moſt skilfull and wiſe, and alſo infinitely good, that he ſhould be leſſe willing? Again, if God Almighty had not care of humane affairs, why hath he given man ſuch a naturall inſtinct and inclination to worſhip him? God and nature, we uſe to ſay, do nothing in vain. We conclude therefore, that it is an argument onely of madneſſe or a diſtempered mind to ſay *There is no God*, or *tho God is, but hath not providence or care over us men*; and that it is the part & duty of a wiſe man, not onely to know, but continually to conſider that there is a Governour over the world, who hath the ſame particular providence over men, that he hath over other naturall Things, that is, to conduct & guide them all by due means

means unto their proper and last ends. And because it is his property to *dispose All Things sweetly*, he guideth every one of them to their ends in such manner as is most congruous and agreeable to their several natures, and man in particular *Freely* according to that liberty of his will, which is natural to him. From whence it is also, that among men, some are good, and some are evill: The good are they whose life is agreeable to reason, conforming themselves to such Illuminations and Inspirations as they have from God, in all things studying and endeavouring to please him: The evill are those who follow not reason, nor observe any rectitude or regularity of life. If therefore the Divine Majesty hath providence over humane affairs, and be Just, as he is, he must certainly have determined with himself both to reward the

the good, and to punish such as be evill: But this we see not done, at least not exactly, not particularly in this life, therefore we must confesse some other life to come, wherein the rewards of the Just and punishments of the wicked shall be more eminently seen. Which if it be so, how much doth it concern us to please God by a good life? And seeing, as we have elsewhere shewen, that there can be no better life, then the Christian life is, it is to no purpose for us to seek any where else how to live, or how to please God: for a life so led cannot be without its due reward, cannot be frustrated of that happinesse which is promised to it; if it could, there were no life sure of happinesse: for the life of Christians in many respects sheweth that God hath peculiar providence over them; and therfore if their faith were not true, neither could their life so much

much be governed by it, nor would God suffer them long in that errour, whose Goodnesse it is to *Illuminate those which are Good and right of heart*, and to harden and leave in blindnesse onely those which are evil. If therefore These Things be so, let us believe in Christ, and let us live Christianly, for so doing, as is manifest by what hath been said, we cannot perish, but must be happy in this world and in the next.

After a man hath by this first consideration prepared himself, and is resolved to do what he can to attain Christian life, the second Precept to be given him is this, *viz. That he seriously consider what that thing is, wherein Christian life doth, as it were essentially consist*; which is the grace of God; I mean that grace, which as we touched before, doth justifie & make a man good in the sight of God. For we observe some men as soon as they be-

begin to have a desire of living Christianly, they presently apply themselves to the Ceremonies of religion, and performing them exteriourly, they imagine all on the sudden, that they are become exceeding good Christians: with which vanity many deceive themselves, pretending to be Christians, but falsly, being indeed a foolish, lukewarm, yet very arrogant sort of people. Men indeed looking onely on the outside, praise what they see, but *God beholds the heart*, and sayes to these men, as our Saviour said to the Pharisees, *ye are they who justifie your selves before men, but God knows your hearts; for many times that which is of high esteem with men, is abomination before God.* He therefore that desires indeed to live Christianly, let him endeavour with the utmost of his power to obtain the grace of God, not resting til by some good signs & ar-

guments

guments he can probably perſuade himſelf that he hath obtained it. And becauſe the Grace of God is given in and by the Holy Sacraments to all thoſe who devoutly and worthily come unto them, let him prepare himſelf in the ſecond place to receive the Sacraments, with the beſt diſpoſition and diligence he can: In particular, If he be a believer, but yet not Baptized, let him prepare himſelf, and come to the Sacrament of Baptiſme, with a true, ſincere Faith, and good Intention; if he be already a Chriſtian, but guilty of ſins, let him come with true Contrition, pure Confeſſion, and perfect Satiſfaction, and ſubmit himſelf to the Sacrament of Pennance, and thereby alſo devoutly fit himſelf for the Sacrament of the Euchariſt: and in this courſe let him perſiſt conſtantly, untill by ſome good conjectures he find, that he may have obtained the

Grace

Grace of God. Now the best of that sort, especially for beginners, seem to be these, *viz.* if he find in himself a great and earnest dislike of his sins past, and of himself for them, a serious intention never to return to them again, a firm purpose to live hereafter according to the law of God, and the duties of that state wherein he is, a delight and taking pleasure in divine matters, and in doing of good works, a contempt of the world and of all worldly things, lastly a longing desire of the life to come, with a wearinesse of this present. He that by such signs as these shall perceive, that by Gods grace he is become a Christian, must also know, that in the way of God, *not to go forward, is to go backward*; and that he onely goeth forward, who findeth himself to grow daily stronger and more fervent in the grace of God, and in all

all virtue: Now this is chiefly procured by continuall Prayers, as we have said elsewhere, which no man can make rightly, but he that studyeth Simplicity; that is to say, Sincerity or purity of heart, integrity of conversation, together with neglect or renouncing of whatsoever is superfluous. He therefore that desires to live Christianly according to the duty of that State, wherein he intendeth to fix and settle himself, must be carefull (as we say) to live *Simply*; that is, Innocently, Purely, and undissemblingly, and in a word, answerably in all things to what his profession requireth, so as he may be alwayes, as much as possible, intent upon Divine and Good Things; I mean, upon the Service of God by Prayer, Meditation, and other Duties of Religion, or upon the Service of his Neighbour,

by works of mercy, spirituall, corporall, at home and abroad. But because it is difficult, yea almost impossible to give instructions here, proper to all persons, by reason of the different estates and conditions of men, I shall advise every one who hath desire to live indeed this life of a Christian, to addresse himself to some good Ghostly-Father, who by his learning and experience may be able to direct him; and according to his counsell to govern himself in his spirituall affairs. But let him take heed, that he fall not into the hands of those luke-warm and indifferent Confessours, who have indeed some form or shew of piety, but renounce the power thereof. It may be thought perhaps very hard to escape such persons, who have outwardly pretences of sanctity, and God only is the discerner of hearts: Nay whereas

is said, *by their fruits ye shall know them*, though they bee indeed but a kind of hypocrites and dissemblers, yet have they some apparence of good works. How then shall we know them? I say still, it shall not be difficult to know them, for any man that desires to walk uprightly; seeing it is written; *Light is sprung up even in darkenesse, to the upright in heart.* And in another place, *Your anointing shall teach you all things.* And even in naturall things we see, those which have different forms can never absolutely agree, especially if those forms be contrary: now the form, that is to say, the spirit and disposition of a true Christian, and of a formalist, are as contrary as can be; the one, that is to say, the true Christian, looking onely at the service of God; the other, ever to his own interest;

therefore 'tis impoſſible they ſhould reſemble in all things, and conſequently impoſſible, that the true Chriſtian, who is himſelf zealous for God, and of a right intention, ſhould not diſcern him who is but luke-warm and an hypocrite; eſpecially after ſome converſation, and that the *Anointing of the Holy Ghoſt*, as was ſaid, *Illuminates him.* As ſoon therefore as it appears that the Father, whom he hath choſen, is one of thoſe who are not as they ſhould be, let him fly from him as he would fly from a Serpent; for as *Solomon* ſaith, *He that walketh with the wiſe ſhall be wiſe; but the friend of fools ſhall become like unto them.* But having found *a good man* indeed, let him open the very ſecrets of his heart to him, let him often and plainly confeſſe his ſinnes, and according to his

his advise let him frequent the holy Communion: for as we have shewen elsewhere, amongst all the Ceremonies of Religion, the Sacraments of Pennance, & of the Eucharist are most efficacious both to cause, to augment, and to preserve Grace. And therefore 'tis the duty of every good Christian to keep himself diligently in estate, to frequent those Sacraments with devotion.

After that a man is thus become a Christian, and labours to live Christianly, the Third precept I am to give him is This, That *he consider well, that by many Tribulations we must enter into the kingdome of God.* For we say in Christian Religion, that *to live well we must do good and suffer evill, and so persevere unto death.* He therefore that desires to live like a Christian, must prepare

and fit himself for tribulation, according to that of the wise man. *My sonne when thou comest to serve God,* saith he, *stand in fear, and prepare thine heart for Temptation*; because adversity foreseen doth lesse trouble us. And that he may more easily endure that which comes, let him often remember the labours and passions of our Blessed Saviour, and of his Saints, as well of the New as the Old Testament: let him read frequently the histories and lives of the Saints, because, as the Apostle saith, *Whatsoever things are written, for our learning they are written, that we by Patience and Consolation of the Scriptures might have Hope*: let him often, yea continually if it were possible, haue before his eyes the shortnesse of this life, and the eternity of that which is to come, that is to say, the eternity of our glory or

pains.

pains. For seeing nothing can hinder but that this short life of ours must quickly passe away, & that at the end of this we must of necessity arrive at the other, which never shall have end; whosoever shall seriously and duely think of this, will surely lesse regard the troubles of the world; nay, he will think himself happy, if by them he can escape those eternall pains of hell, and gain heaven though at last. He must also remember, that God Almighty hath prepared most excellent rewards for all those who for his Sake, suffer temptations and persecutions here, as it is written, *Eye hath not seen nor the ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him.* He that thinks of this, will not certainly much shrink at any temporary tribulations, but rather be ready to cry

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out, confessing with the Apostle, that *the passions of this present life are not equall to the Glory which is to come, which shall be revealed in us by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.* To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be ascribed Glory and Dominion through all ages for ever. Amen.

FINIS.

THE PROFIT OF BELIEVING,

Very uſefull
Both for all thoſe that are not yet reſolved what Religion they ought to embrace:

And for them that deſire to know whither their Religion be true or no.

Written by S. *Auguſtine.*



LONDON,
Printed by ROGER DANIEL
In *Lovels* Court, near *Pauls* Church-yard.
1651.

The Preface,

To the well-disposed READER.

Learned Reader,

I Know thou art not ignorant, that of all the affairs and businesses in this world, there is none of that consequence and importance unto thee, as the saving of thy soul: and that our Blessed Saviour who knew best of all the inestimable value thereof, and vouchsafed to redeem it at so dear a rate as with his own pretious bloud, plainly declared the importance thereof, when he said in the Gospel, *Mat.* 16. 16. *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the world and loose his own soul? Or what shall he give in exchange there-*

of? Wherefore let me adviſe thee to ſeek out and embrace the true Faith and Religion, for that *without ſuch a Faith* (according to the Apoſtle, *Heb.*11.6.) *it is impoſſible to pleaſe God,* and without pleaſing of him, it is impoſſible to be ſaved. If thou thinkeſt that thou haſt found out the truth already, and that thou doſt embrace it, then give me leave to tell thee, that the world at this preſent abounds with an hundred hereſies at leaſt, the *embracers whereof ſhall not* (according to S. *Pauls* doctrine, *Gal.*5.20.) *inherit the kingdome of God,* and yet (as the ſame Apoſtle doth affirm, *Epheſ.*4.5.) there is but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſme:* ſo that it is an hundred to one, but that thy Faith and thy Religion are falſe, and thy ſalvation is in danger thereby. Is there not then great reaſon that thou ſhouldeſt well conſider, whither the Faith

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and Religion which thou embraceſt be true or no, when upon this reſolution depends thy fruition of unſpeakable bliſſe, or intolerable ſuffering of endleſſe pains for all eternity? How to find out the true Faith & Religion it is a matter of very great difficulty, not onely by reaſon that there are many faiths and religions in the world, and of all theſe there is but one true, and all the reſt be falſe, but alſo for that the controverſies debated now adayes are ſo many, and ſo intricate, that few have leaſure to ſtudy them, and fewer ability to conceive and underſtand them: yet the zeal of learned Writers hath not been wanting to ſatisfie men herein. But what age ſince the Apoſtles dayes hath brought forth any man ſo able to perform ſo great a task, as was that incomparable Doctor S. *Auguſtine lib. 3. de Eccleſ. fol.* 170. who (as Doctour

Field asserteth) *was the greatest and chiefest of the antient Fathers, and the most famous of all the Divines which the Church hath had since the Apostles time:* and as Doctour *Covell* affirmeth in his answer to Master *Burges* pag. 3.) *hath farre excelled all others that have been or are like to be hereafter (those onely excepted that were inspired by the Holy Ghost) both in Divine and Humane knowledge.* What man since the Apostles dayes, could ever so well discern true doctrine from false, truth from errour, and true faith from heresie, as could that great S. *Augustine* who did not onely like another *David*, fight against the *Goliah* of one heresie, but like another *Joshua* fought the battels of the Lord against all the force and power of heresie in his dayes, for fourty years together? Wherefore if this great Doctour should have

have left any adviſes or inſtructions behinde him unto any of his dear friends that were then hereticks, whereby he taught them how to find out the true faith and religion, amongſt ſo many hereſies, ought not ſuch inſtructions to be greatly deſired, and if any ſuch could be found to be highly eſteemed, and diligently peruſed? Surely thou wilt ſay, that coming from ſo great a Doctour, and being ſo proper and neceſſary for theſe times, without doubt they ought. Why then Learned Reader, give me leave to preſent unto thee a learned Treatiſe of his, which he ſent unto his dear and learned friend *Honoratus*, to draw him from the Manichean hereſie to the true Religion; I durſt not preſume to tender it unto thee in this poor Engliſh habit, were I not confident that thou ſeekeſt more after the true Religion and the ſaving of

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thy soul, then after vain eloquence, & the *entising words of humane wisdome*; 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. but I will assure thee, under this poore attire thou wilt find a rich and a learned discourse of great S. *Augustine*, not onely very profitable for those that are not yet resolved in point of Religion, but also for them that dere to be satisfied whither the faith and Religion which they embrace, be true or no. If the stile be displeasing and ungratefull unto thee, know that very many of the African Fathers have harsh stiles, besides consider how hard a matter it is to teach a native African to speak true English.

In this work, first he shews how the old Testament is to be expounded, and defends the Authority of it against the Manichees that rejected it. Secondly he overthrowes that Manichean principle. That nothing

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is to be believed in point of Faith which is not first by reason made manifest and evident unto the Believer. In the third place he adviseth fervent and frequent prayer, peace and tranquility of mind, and a sequestration of affections from terrene things, as aids necessary for the finding out the truth: then declaring that Christ hath raised a very great and a famous Church consisting of all Nations, which is to continue very visible and conspicuous even to the worlds end, he exhorts *Honoratus* to addresse himself unto the Pastours and Teachers thereof, and to learn of them the true faith and Religion.

This way of proceeding to find out the truth, is far more short and easie then by the examination of all the points of controverted doctrine by their conformity to the holy Scriptures, for it consists in two points onely,

onely, first, in seeking out which of all the Churches is the Church of Christ, and secondly, whither this Church can erre or no.

For the finding out of the Church S. *Augustine* propoſed four marks unto *Honoratus*, Unity, Universality, Sanctity, and Apoſtolicall Succeſſion, the which are ſet down very plainly in Scripture.

The Unity of the Church is twofold, in body, and in faith; in regard of the firſt our Saviour ſaith his Church is *one fold* and hath *one ſhepheard Joh.* 10.16. and the Apoſtle calls it *one body*, 1 *Cor.* 12.13. In reſpect of the ſecond, S. *Paul* earneſtly exhorted the Corinthians, 1 *Cor.* 1.10. *to ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſion amongſt them: but that they be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind and in the ſame judgement*; and he beſeeched the Epheſians *to endeavour*

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to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace, Epheſ. 4. 3, 4, 5. affirming that there is *one body and one ſpirit, one hope of their calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſme*; and the Scripture teſtifieth that in the Apoſtles dayes *the multitude of Believers were of one heart and of one ſoul.* Acts 4. 32.

The Univerſality of the Church is alſo twofold, in time and in place; this later was foretold by the Prophet *Moſes* relating Gods promiſe made to *Abraham* of an ample poſterity, and *that all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed in his ſeed: Gen.* 22. 18. *Gal.* 3. 8. by the Royall Pſalmiſt, declaring that God the Father would give unto his Son *the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt part of the earth for his poſſeſſion, Pſal.* 2. 8. and *that he ſhould have dominion from ſea to ſea, and from the River to the ends*

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of the earth : Pſal. 72. 8. and by the Prophet Iſaiah, affirming *that all nations ſhall flow to the mountain of the Lords houſe*, Iſa. 2. v. 2. For the accompliſhment of theſe Prophecies our Bleſſed Saviour declared, Luke 24. v. 44. that *all things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalmes, concerning him* : and v. 47. that *repentance and remiſſion of ſinnes, ſhould be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem*; and for the performance hereof, he gave a commiſſion unto his Apoſtles to *teach all nations*, Matth. 28. 19. and *to preach the Goſpel to every creature*, Mar. 19. v. 15.

That the Church of Chriſt ſhould be univerſall for time, and continue perpetually unto the worlds end, it was plainly foretold by the Prophet Iſaiah, who ſpeaking of our B. Saviour,

our faith, *that of the encreaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end. Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdome ſhall he ſit to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgement, and with juſtice from henceforth even for ever*; and that no doubt may be made of the performance hereof, the Prophet addes, *the zeal of the Lord of Hoſts will perform this.* And by the Prophet Daniel affirming that *in the dayes of thoſe Kings ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a kingdome which ſhall not be left to other people, but it ſhall break in pieces and conſume all thoſe kingdomes, and it ſhall ſtand for ever,* Dan. 2. 44. All which was confirmed by the Angel Gabriel, ſaying, *The Lord ſhall give unto Chriſt the throne of his Father David and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob, and of his kingdome there ſhall be no end,* Luke 1. ver. 32, 33. For the

perpetuall settlement and establishing of this Church, Christ said unto S. Peter: *Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Matth. 16. 18. Touching the sanctity of the Church of Christ, God by the Prophet Ezekiel saith, *I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore: and the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctifie Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore*, Ezek. 37. v. 26,28. and by the Prophet Malachi, Mal. 1. 11. *From the rising of the sunne even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles: and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a peace-offering.* Unto this sanctity our Blessed Saviour exhorts us, saying, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father*

Father which is in heaven, Matth. 5. 16. and Mark 7. v. 13, 14. *Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate, for ſtrait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* And teaching how to diſtinguiſh the good from the bad, he ſaith, v. 20. *By their fruits ye ſhall know them.* As for Apoſtolicall ſucceſſion, S. Paul ſaith, Ephes. 4. v. 11, 12, 13. that *Chriſt gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets: and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtours and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come into the unity of faith, and of the unity of the Son ne of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſſe of Chriſt*, that is, (as Doctour *Fulk* againſt the Rhem. Teſt. in Ephes. 4. ſect. 4. fol. 335. and Mr. *Calvin* in his Inſtit.

cap. 8. *de fide*, sect. 37, 38. pag. 233. 234. do expound) for ever.

As for the second point, whether the Church of Christ can erre or no, S, *Augustine* saith, that neither the violence of heathens, nor the subtilty of hereticks can overthrow it, which agrees with our Saviours promise, Matth. 16. 18. that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*; and, to preserve her from all errour and heresie, *Christ promised to be alwayes with her even to the worlds end*, Matth. 28. 20. and God made this covenant with her: Isa. 59. 21. *My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever*; by which words (saith Mr. *Calvin* in Comment. hujus loci) *God promiseth that the Church shall never*

ver be deprived of this ineſtimable benefit, to be governed by the Holy Ghoſt, and to be ſuported by heavenly doctrine: and to this effect he ſent down the *Holy Ghoſt to teach the Church all truth and to remain with her for ever*, Joh. 16. 13. Joh. 14. 16. Thus thou ſeeſt how S. *Auguſtines* inſtructions for finding out the truth are grounded in Scripture, but more expreſſely in S. *Pauls* doctrine, who tells us, Rom. 10. 17. that faith *cometh by hearing, and hearing is by the word of God*; if we ask him how men may come to heare the word of God, he anſwers, v. 14, 15. *How ſhall they hear without a preacher? and how ſhall they preach unleſſe they be ſent?* So that faith is bred in men by hearing and believing the word of God, made known unto them by preachers lawfully ſent: which preachers (as he ſaith to the Epheſians) E-

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phes. 4. v. 11, 12, 13. are alwayes to be found in the Church of Christ, and are placed there, ver. 14. that *from henceforth we be no more children tossed to fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleights of men, and cunning craftinesse whereby they lie in wait to deceive*; which is an office that cannot be performed by men that are frail and subject to errour, unles the Lord by his divine assistance doth preserve them from erring. Doctour *Field* having considered the facility and solidity of this method, doth advise all those to practise it, that desire to be satisfied in matters of Religion in these terms, Epist. dedic. of the Church. *Seeing the controversies in our time are grown in number so many and in nature so intricate, that few have time and leisure, fewer strength of understanding to examine them: what remaineth for men desirous of*

satisfa-

ſatisfaction in things of ſuch conſequence, but diligently to ſearch out, which amongſt all the ſocieties of men in this world, is that bleſſed company of holy ones, that houſhold of faith, that Spouſe of Chriſt, and Church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of truth: that ſo they may embrace her communion, follow her directions, and reſt in her judgement? Now that thou maiſt be the better able to follow this wholeſome counſell, let me adviſe thee with care and diligence to peruſe this enſuing treatiſe, and that thou maiſt receive much benefit thereby for thy ſouls health, thou haſt already the prayers of S. *Auguſtine*, and thou ſhalt have the hearty wiſhes and deſires of

Thy charitable
Welwiſher.
A. P.

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THE

The Profit of Believing.

Chap. I.

How Saint Augustine came to be deceived by the Manichees.

O Honoratus,

IF any Heretick, and a man believing Hereticks did seem unto me to be one and the same thing; I should think fit to be silent at this present, and to abstain both from speaking and writing in this cause: But now whereas they do verymuch differ (*For he is an Heretick* (*according to my opinion*) *who for some temporall*

rall benefit, and chiefly for glory and his own preferment, either broacheth or followeth false and new Opinions: but a man believing Hereticks, is one that is deluded with a certain imagination of Piety and Truth) I held it to be my duty to deliver thee my opinion, touching the finding out and embracing the Truth, with the love whereof we have both (as thou knoweſt) been greatly enflamed even from our youths. Truth is a thing farre differing from that which vain men do conceive, who having too deeply ſettled their affections upon theſe bodily and corporall things, do hold and imagine it to be nothing elſe, but what they do perceive and diſcern by thoſe five moſt known Meſſengers of the Body: and they to ſſe to and fro and rerevolve in their minds the impreſſions and

images

images which they have received from these things, even when they endeavour to disbelieve their senses: and by a deadly and a most deceitfull rule taken from thence, they think that they do frame a right and perfect judgement of the ineffable Secrets and Mysteries of Faith. There is nothing more easie (my most dear friend) then for a man not onely to say, but also to think that he hath found out the Truth: but how extream hard it is to find it out indeed, thou wilt (as I hope) acknowledge and confesse upon the perusall of these my writings; which that they may prove beneficiall unto thee, or at least not hurtfull, and unto all those into whose hands they may chance to light, I have beseeched the divine Majesty, and I do beseech him; and I hope it will come to passe, if mine own conscience can

but bear me witneſſe that I came to write them not with a deſire of vain renown or frivolous oſtentation, but with a pious and a ſerviceable mind. My intent therefore is to prove unto thee, if I can, that it is ſacrilegiouſly and raſhly done of the Manichees, to ſpeak bitter words and inveigh againſt thoſe, who following the authority of the Catholick faith, are fortified and ſtrengthened beforehand by believing, and are prepared to receive the light of the Divine grace, before they can behold that Verity and Truth which is ſeen and beheld with a pure and clean mind. For thou knoweſt, O *Honoratus*, that we put our ſelves into the company of ſuch men for no other cauſe, but for that they ſaid, that, the terrour of authority being ſet aſide, they would with plain and admirable reaſons bring their hearers and followers unto God, and free them

from all errour. For what else was it that enforced me to follow them, and to hearken to them attentively, almost for the space of nine years, having despised and contemned the religion which by my parents was ingraffed in me, being a little child, but for that they affirmed that we are terrified with superstition, and commanded to believe, before any reason is given us of belief: and that they importune and urge none to believe, untill the truth be first discussed and made manifest unto them; who would not be allured with these promises? especially the mind of a young man desirous of truth, a babler, and one that was puffed up with pride upon disputations had with some skilfull and learned Schoolmen: and such an one they found me then to be, namely, who despised (*my former religion*) like old wives tales, and desired to embrace

and with greedineſſe to receive the manifeſt and ſincere Truth which they promiſed to teach and deliver. But again, what reaſon withdrew me and called me back that I did not wholly adhere unto them, but kept my ſelf in the degree of Hearers, as they uſe to call them, and did not forgo the hopes and affairs which I had in this world; but for that I alſo noted and obſerved, that they were more eloquent and copious in confuting others, then firm and certain in proving and maintaining their own grounds? But what ſhall I ſay of my ſelf, who was now become a Catholick Chriſtian: who being almoſt exhauſted and greedy after a very long thirſt, was now with an ardent affection returned again to the breaſts of the Church, which I ſhaked and wrung, much weeping and lamenting, to the end I might not onely draw from thence ſuf-

sufficient comfort for my misery and affliction, but might also recover my former hope of life and salvation? What then shall I say of my self? And as for thee, thou didest so vehemently hate and detest them, that I could hardly draw thee by entreaties and exhortations to hearken unto them and try them: and when thou heardest them, with what other thing I pray thee wert thou taken and delighted (for I beseech thee, call it to remembrance) but with a certain great presumption and promise of reasons? But because for a long time they made many large and vehement discourses touching the errours of unskilfull men (which every one that is but meanly learned can easily do) it was late before I came to the knowledge thereof. And if they delivered any thing unto us out of their own men, we thought there was a necessity to receive and em-

brace it, when as other things upon which we might rely, occurred not: wherein they dealt with us as deceitfull Fowlers are wont to do, who prick down limetwigs by a waters side, to the end they may deceive the thirsty Birds: for they stop up, and by some means or other they cover the other waters that are thereabouts: or they drive the birds from thence with frights and fears, that not by their own free choise and election, but meerly for necessity and want of water they may fall into their snares. But why do I not return this answer to my self, that such neat and pretty similitudes as these, and such like reprehensions may be both most civilly and most snappishly objected by any enemy or adversary whatsoever, against all those that deliver any thing by teaching or instruction? But yet for this cause I thought it necessary to

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insert some such thing into these my writings, that I may warn and admonish them thereby to leave off all such manner of proceedings: to the end that (as a certain man said) the toyes of common places being set aside, one thing may contend and strive with another, one cause with another, one reason with another: wherefore let them forbear to say, what they hold in a manner necessary to be spoken, when any one forsakes them that hath long been their hearer. The light is passed through him. For thou my greatest care (for I am not too solicitous for them) seest how vain a thing this is, and how easie a matter it is for any one to blame and reprehend it; this therefore I leave to thy wisdome to be discussed. For I am not afraid lest thou shouldest think that I was deprived of light, when I was entangled with a worldly life, and had a

remote and obscure hope of a beautifull wife, of the pomp of riches, of the vanity of honours, and of other hurtfull and pernicious pleasures: for I ceased not to desire and hope for all these things (as thou knowest right well) when I was their follower and heard them attentively: nor do I attribute this to their doctrine, for I confesse they diligently warned and admonished me to beware of these things: but to say that I am now destitute of light, when as I have alienated and withdrawn my self from all these shadows and semblances of things, and have resolved to content my self with such food onely, as may seem necessary to the health of my body: and that I was enlightned and shining before, when I was addicted unto those things and was intangled with them, is the part of a man (to speak in the mildest manner) who less considerately

ponders

ponders the things of which he much desires to talk and discourse. But if you please let us come to the matter.

Chap. II.

That the Manichees do condemn the old Testament.

THou art not ignorant how the Manichees reprehending the Catholick Faith, and especially renting and tearing in pieces the old Testament, do move and disturb the unskilfull people: who truly know not how those things are to be understood, and how being taken they may profitably descend and be conveyed into the veins and marrow of tender souls. And because there occurre certain things in those books which may give some offence to those that are ignorant and careless of themselves (as the greatest part of the common people is) they may be plau-

plausibly reprehended and blamed, but cannot be plausibly defended by many, by reason of the mysteries which are contained therein; and those few that can do it, affect not publick and open conflicts whereby to divulge their fame and renown, and for this cause they are not known at all but unto those onely, who with much care and diligence do seek and enquire after them: wherefore touching this rashnesse of the Manichees, in reprehending the Old Testament and the Catholick Faith, hear I beseech thee, the things which move and trouble me; the which I desire and hope that thou wilt receive with such an hearty mind and good will as by me they are delivered and spoken; for God, unto whom the secrets of my conscience lie open and are manifest, knows, that I deal not malitiously in this speech, but as I conceive, it ought to be understood

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in proof of the truth, unto which long since I have addicted my self, and that with an incredible care and solicitude, lest I should erre and go astray with you, which I may easily do; when as to hold the same course with you, and yet to embrace and keep the right way, it is a matter (not to speak too harshly) of extream difficultie. But I presume that even in this hope which I have of your attaining together with me unto the way of wisdome, he, unto whom I have consecrated my self, will not leave nor forsake me: when dayes and nights I endeavour to behold: and for that I perceive my self to be weak and infirm, by reason that the eye of my soul is for my sinnes, and the custome thereof wounded with the stripes of inveterate opinions, I beg it oftentimes with weeping and tears, and as it happeneth unto mens eyes, which after

ter the ſufferance of a long blindneſſe and darkneſſe are hardly open: they have a great deſire to ſee light, and yet by their twinckling and turning away, they refuſe to behold it, eſpecially if any one ſhould endeavour to expoſe them to the light of the Sun: ſo it falls out with me at the preſent, for I acknowledge that there is a certain unſpeakable and ſingular good of the ſoul, which may be ſeen and contemplated with the mind, but I confeſſe with tears in mine eyes and ſighs from my heart that I am not yet fit nor able to behold it: wherefore the Divine goodneſſe will not forſake me, if I fain nothing, if I ſpeak according to my duty, if I love the truth, if I affect friendſhip, and if I take a great care that thou mayeſt not be deceived.

CHAP.

Chap. III.

Of the four wayes of expounding the Old Testament.

THose that earnestly desire to know the Old Testament, are to understand that it is taught and expounded after four manner of wayes: according to the History, according to the Etiologie, according to the Analogy, and according to the Allegory. Think me not foolish for using Greek names: First, for that I have so received, and I dare not deliver this otherwise unto thee then as I have received: Next thou also observest, that we have no usuall names for these things: and if I had framed any by-interpretation, I should be lesse apt to be understood: and if I should use any circumlocution, I should be lesse quick and lesse ready in discoursing: this

onely I intreat and beseech thee to believe, that howsoever I may erre, I do it not out of any arrogancy or pride. The Scripture is treated according to the history when it is declared therein what is written, or what is done: and what is not done but written onely as it were done. According to the Etiology, when it is shewed thereby for what cause any thing is either done or said. According to the Analogy, when it is demonstrated that the two Testaments, the Old and the New, are not contrary the one unto the other. According to the Allegory, when it is read therein that certain things that are written, ought not to be understood according to the letter, but according to the figure. All these manner of wayes of alledging Scripture, have been used by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the Apostles. He cited Scripture according to the

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History, when, unto those that objected that his Disciples had plucked the ears of Corn upon the Sabbath day, he answered, *Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him: how he entred into the house of God and did eat the loaves of Proposition (or Shew-bread) which it was not lawfull for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but for Priests onely?* Mat. 12. 1, 3, 4. 1 Sam. 21. 6. Exod. 29. 32. He alledged Scripture according to the Etiology, when having forbidden the dismissing of wives for any cause but onely fornication, unto the Pharisees, who told him that *Moses* had given men leave to dismisse them, having first given them a bill of divorce, he said: *This Moses did for the hardnesse of your hearts.* Deut. 24. 1. Mat. 19. 8. for here a cause was rendred, why that was well permit-

mitted by *Moses* for a time, to the end that this which Christ commanded might seem to shew and demonstrate other times, but to declare how the divine Providence hath with a certain wonderfull disposition ordered and composed the courses and order of these times, it is a long work. Now touching the Analogy, whereby appears the accord and consent of both the Testaments, what shall I say, but that all those have used it, unto whose authority the Manichees do give place, when as they may consider with themselves how many things they are wont to say are thrust into the divine Scripture by I know not what corrupters of the truth? which I alwayes thought to be an extream weak speech even when I heard and followed them: neither was this my opinion onely, but thine also (for I well remember it) and it was the opinion of us all who

who endeavoured to be somewhat more careful and wary in judging, than was the common people and multitude of believers. And whereas they have expounded and declared unto me many things that did much move and trouble me (namely those wherein they boasted and bragged oftentimes, and that more abundantly because more securely, as not having any adversary to resist and oppose them. I think they have spoken nothing more impudently or (to speak more mildly) with lesse circumspection and more weakneſſe, then that the divine Scriptures are falsified and corrupted: when as it ought but lately to have been done, and yet they cannot convince it to be so, by any copies that are now extant: for if they did say, that they did not think that they ought to receive those Scriptures at all, because they are written by such Authours

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as they did not conceive to have written the truth, their pretence of rejecting them would in some sort be more hidden, and their errour more humane and pardonable: for upon this ground they have rejected the book which is called the *Acts of the Apostles*: at which their proceedings, when I well weigh it and consider it with my self, I cannot sufficiently wonder and admire; for they wanted not onely humane wildome herein, but even a reasonable and an indifferent judgement: for that book hath so many things, which are like unto those which they do receive, that it seems to me to be a great folly not to receive this also, and if any thing displeaseth them therein, presently to say it is false and put in: now if they judge such a speech to be impudent (as indeed it is) why should they conceive those things to deserve any credit and esteem in S. *Paul's* Epi-

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ſiles, and the four books of the Goſpell, wherein I know not whether or no, proportionably ſpeaking, there be many more things then there could be in that book, which they would have men believe, to have been thruſt in by falſifiers and corrupters? But this indeed is my opinion, which I requeſt thee to weigh and conſider with me, with a very clear and peaceable judgement: for thou art not ignorant how the Manichees endeavouring to bring in the the perſon of their authour *Manicheus* into the number of the Apoſtles, do ſay that by him we have received the Holy Ghoſt, whom our Lord promiſed to ſend to his Diſciples: if therefore they ſhould receive thoſe *Acts of the Apoſtles* wherein the comming of the Holy Ghoſt is evidently declared and ſet down, *Act.* 2. 2. they could find no ground to ſay why that was inſerted and put

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int for they pretend I know not what corrupters of the divine books to have been before *Manichæus* his time: and that they were corrupted by those that desired to confound the law of the Jews with the Gospel of Christ; but this they cannot say of the Holy Ghost, unlesse peradventure they will affirm that the corrupters could foretell things that were to come, and thereupon did put into their books that which might be produced against one *Manichæus* who sometimes was to come, and who should say and averre that he had sent the Holy Ghost; but of the Holy Ghost we intend to speak more plainly hereafter; but now let us return to our former matter; for I think that I have sufficiently demonstrated and shewn, that the historicall sense is to be found in the Old Testament, and the Etiologicall and Analogicall in the New:

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it remains that I ſhew alſo the Allegoricall therein. Our Redeemer himſelf alledgeth in the Goſpel an Allegory out of the Old Teſtament, ſaying: *This generation ſeeketh after a ſign, and none ſhall be given unto it, but the ſign of the Prophet* Jonas: *for as* Jonas *was three dayes and three nights in the Whales belly: ſo ſhall the Sonne of man be three dayes and three nights in the heart of the earth.* Mat. 12. 39 40. Jonas 1. 17. And what ſhall I ſay of the Apoſtle *Paul*, who alſo in his 1 Ep. to the *Corinthians* c. 10. to the 12. v. ſignifies, that the hiſtory it ſelf of *Exodus* was an Allegory of the Chriſtian people that was to come? *Moreover Brethren, I would not* (ſaith he) *that ye ſhould be ignorant how that all our Fathers were under the cloud,* Exod. 13. 21. Num. 14. 14. Deut. 1. 33. Pſal. 78. 14. *and all paſſed through the ſea:* Exod. 14. 22.

14.22. Josh.4,23. Psal.78.13. *and were all Baptized unto* Moses *in the cloud and in the sea: and did all eat the same spirituall meat, and did all drink the same spirituall drink: (for they drank of the spirituall Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ) but with many of them God was not well pleased:* Num. 24.28. and 26.65. *for they were overthrown in the wildernesse. Now these things were our figures (or examples) to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.* Psalm. 106.14. *Neither let us worship Idols, as some of them did, as it is written,* Exod.32.6. *The people sate down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them did, and there fell in one day three and twenty thousand men,* Num.25.9. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted*

tempted him, and were deſtroyed by ſerpents. Numb. 21.6. *Neither let us murmure, as ſome of them murmured, and they periſhed by the deſtroyer.* Numb. 14. 37. *And all theſe things happened to them in a figure (or for an example) but they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.* The ſame Apoſtle uſeth alſo a certain Allegory, which is much to our purpoſe, becauſe the Manichees are wont to alledge it in their diſputations, and boaſt of it, when writing to the *Galathians* he ſaith, Gal. 4.22,23,24,25,26. *For it is written that Abraham had two ſonnes, the one by a bond-maid,* Gen. 16.15. *the other by a free-woman.* Gen. 21. 2. *but he that was by the bond-maid was born according to the fleſh; but he that was by the free-woman was born according to promiſe: which things are ſaid by an Allegory: for*

these are the two Testaments, the one from the mount Sina which gendreth to bondage, which is Agar (for Sina is a mountain in Arabia adjoyning to Hierusalem that now is) and is in bondage with her children. But Hierusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Here therefore those too too wicked men whilest they endeavour to frustrate the Law, do enforce us to allow and approve of those Scriptures: for they diligently observe that it is said, that they are in bondage that are under the Law, and they often alledge that last above the rest, Galath. 5.4. *Christ is become of no effect unto you that are justified by the Law, ye are falne from Grace.* We grant all these things to be true, neither do we say, that that Law is necessary, but onely for those unto whom bondage is yet profitable and expedient; and therefore that it was fitly

fitly and commodiously ordained that such men as could not be reclaimd and withdrawn from sinning by reason, ought to be constrained by such a law, namely by the threats and terrours of those punishments, which even fools themselves can perceive and apprehend: from which when the grace of Christ doth free us, it doth not condemn that Law, but it invites us for the time to come to obey his charity, and not to serve and be subject to the terrour of the Law. For that is a Grace, that is to say, a Benefit, which they that yet desire to be under the bonds of the Law, do not understand that the Divine Majesty hath imparted unto them; whom *Paul* the Apostle doth deservedly reprove, as though they were Infidels, because they did not believe that they are now freed by our Lord Jesus Christ, from that servitude and bondage whereunto

they were subject for a certain time by Gods most just order and disposing. Hereupon it is that the same Apostle saith. Gal.3.24. *The law was our Pedagogue (or usher) in Christ*, he therefore gave unto men a Pedagogue whom they should fear, who gave them afterwards a master whom they should love: and yet nevertheless in those precepts and Commandments of the Law, (which it is not lawfull for Christians now to use, such as are either the Sabbath or Circumcision or the Sacrifices, and whatsoever is of that sort) so great mysteries are contained and comprehended, that every godly man may understand that there is nothing more pernicious and hurtfull, then that whatsoever is comprised therein should be understood according to the letter, that is, to the native sense of the words: and nothing more wholesome and profitable,

fitable, then to have it expounded according to the ſpirit or ſpirituall ſenſe and underſtanding: hence it is that *the letter killeth, but the ſpirit quickeneth or giveth life.* 2 Cor. 3. 6. hence it is, that *in the reading of the Old Teſtament, the ſelf ſame veil remaineth untaken away, becauſe in Chriſt it is made void:* verſ. 14. for not the Old Teſtament, but the veile thereof is made void in Chriſt, to the end that may be underſtood and made manifeſt by him, which without him is hidden and obſcure: and therefore the ſame Apoſtle immediately after ſaith: *But when thou ſhalt turn to Chriſt the veil ſhall be taken away,* verſ. 16. but he doth not ſay that the Law or the Old Teſtament ſhall be taken away: they are not therefore taken away by our Lords grace, as though unprofitable things lay hidden and were covered there, but rather the

veil or cover is taken away, wherewith wholesome and profitable things were covered and kept close. This is the benefit which they reap and receive, who with a studious and a devout mind, and not with a troubled and wicked spirit, do seek after the sense of those Scriptures: and both the order of things, and the causes of what is said and done, and so great an accord of the Old Testament with the New, even to the last tittle, and so great mysteries and secrets of figures are clearly and plainly demonstrated and shewn: that all the things that are found out by interpreting them, may enforce men to confesse and grant that they are miserable and wretched, that will condemn these things, before they have attained to the knowledge of them.

Touching those words of the Apostle: *The letter killeth, but the spirit quickneth,* as they are here expounded

pounded by S. *Augustine*, he passeth this judgement, that he did more conveniently in his opinion expound them in his book *De Spiritu & Litera*, though this sense is not to be rejected. *Lib.* 1. *Retract.* c.14.

CHAP. IV.

Of three wayes whereby men fall into errour.

THat for the present the depth and profoundnesse of knowledge and science being set aside, I may so treat with thee, as I think I ought to treat with my familiar friend, that is, as well as I can, but not so well as I have admired to see very learned men been able to do: there be three kinds of errour into which men may fall when they reade any thing; I will speak of every one of them. The first kind is, when

that is thought to be true which indeed is false, and was thought to be so by the Authour that wrote it. The second kind not being of so large an extent, yet no lesse damageable and hurtfull then the former, is, when that which is false, is thought to be true, and was thought to be so by the Authour that wrote it. The third kind, is, when some truth is learned out of another mans writing, which the Authour himself that wrote it, understood not: in which kind there is no small profit, yea if thou dost consider it attentively, thou shalt find that the Reader gains unto himself the whole profit of the reading. An example of the first kind is this: If any one should say and believe that *Rhadamanthus* heareth and judgeth in hell the causes of the dead, because he read it in *Virgils* verses; for this man erres two manner of wayes: first, for that he be-

believeth that which he ought not to believe; and secondly, for that the Authour which he read, is not thought to have believed it. An example of the second kind may be this: because *Lucretius* writes, that the soul is made of atomes, and that after death it is dissolved into the same atomes and perisheth, if any one should think that this is true, and that he ought to believe it: for this man is not lesse unhappy for perswading himself certainly in so great a matter that to be true, which indeed is false, for that *Lucretius*, by whose books he was deceived, was of that opinion; for what doth it avail him to be certain of the Authours opinion, when as he hath made choise of such an authour, not by whom, but with whom he might erre and be deceived? An example of the third kind is this: if any one having read some place in *Epicurus*

his works wherein he praiſeth continency, ſhould affirm, That he placed the chiefeſt good and felicity in Virtue; and that therefore he ought not to be blamed nor reprehended; now though *Epicurus* believes that the chiefeſt happineſſe of man conſiſts in corporall pleaſures, yet what prejudice doth this man receive and ſuſtain by his errour, when as he holds not ſo filthy and hurtfull an opinion, nor for any other cauſe is he pleaſed with *Epicurus*, but for that he conceives him not to have held ſo bad an opinion as ought not indeed to have been held and maintained? this errour, is not onely humane and pardonable, but alſo oftentimes moſt worthy of a man: for what if a man ſhould make me this relation touching one of my loving friends, that my friend when he was come to mans eſtate, told him in the hearing of many, that his infancy

fancy and childhood had been so pleasing and delightfull unto him, that even he swore he would lead such a life afterwards: and that I had received such certain proofs of the truth of this matter, that I could not without shame and impudency deny it. Should I seem worthy of blame and reproof, if I should think that when he said this, he meant and intended to signifie thereby, that he took much delight in an innocent life, and a mind alienated from those appetites and desires wherewith mankind is wont to be involved, and thereupon my love and affection towards him should be much increased, although perhaps the young man having been foolish in his tender age, had greatly affected a certain liberty in playing and eating and sluggish rest? for suppose he had died after I had received this relation touching him,

and

and no body could be found that could tell me what his judgement and opinion was herein: would any one be so mischievous and wicked as to fall out and be angry with me for praising his resolution and intention according to the intelligence which had been delivered and imparted unto me? Yea what if a just valuer and esteemer of things should perhaps make no difficulty to praise and commend my good will and opinion, for that I was taken and delighted with innocency, and being a man would rather frame a good conceit of another man in a doubtfull matter, even when he spake otherwise then he ought to have done?

CHAP.

Chap. V.

Of the truth of the Holy Scripture.

NOw thou haſt heard the three kinds of errour into which men may fall that reade any thing: hear alſo ſo many conditions and differences of the ſame Scriptures, for it is neceſſary that ſo many do occurre; for either ſome one hath written a profitable work, and another doth not rightly and profitably underſtand it: or the writer and the reader have both beſtowed their labours unprofitably; or the reader doth well and rightly underſtand, but the Authours work is uſeleſſe and unprofitable. Of theſe three kinds the firſt I diſallow not, the laſt I eſteem not: for whether can I blame an Authour whoſe work is not well and rightly underſtood, if he be no way guilty of that fault, nor can I be troubled

troubled to see an Authour read that hath not known the truth, when I see that his readers do receive no hurt nor prejudice thereby: wherefore, there is one kind that is most approved, and is most purged and cleansed from errour, which is, when not onely good works are set forth, but are also well and rightly understood by their readers; yet notwithstanding that also is divided into two kinds, and it is not wholly free from errour: for it happeneth oftentimes that the writer hath a good meaning, and the reader hath so too, but another then he, and oftentimes a better conceit, oftentimes a lower, and yet one that is commodious and profitable: but when as we attain to the true sense and meaning of the Authour which we reade, and the work much conduceth to the leading of a good life, the truth appears abundantly therein, and there is no

gap

gap nor passage that lies open to falshood and deceit. This kind is very seldome to be found, when the discourse is about things that are extremely hard and obscure; neither in my opinion can it be clearly and manifestly known, but onely be believed: for by what proofs or arguments can I so perfectly gather what the will of a man is, that is absent or dead, that I can swear and take my oath what it is: when as if he were asked, even being present there might be many things which he might most officiously conceal and hide, although he were not a wicked man? but to know the quality of the Authour I think it nothing avails to the knowledge of the matter: yet nevertheless he highly deserves to be reputed and esteemed to be a good man, who by his books and writings affords great assistance unto mankind and to posterity. Now I would have

have the Manichees to tell me in which kind they place the errour (which they conceive) of the Catholick Church. If in the first it is a grievous fault indeed, but we need not seek farre to know how to defend it; for it is sufficient to deny that we understand it, as they conceive, when they inveigh against it. If in the second, it is no lesse grievous, but the same words will serve to confute it. If in the third, it is no fault at all. Go to then, and hereafter consider the Scriptures themselves: for what do they object against the books which are called the Old Testament? do they say that they are good, but that we do not well and rightly understand them? but they themselves receive them not. Do they say that they are neither good, nor rightly understood by us? but this is sufficiently convinced by the former defense; or will they say, that we rightly

ly understand them, but that the books be naught? what is this, but to acquit and absolve thei living adversaries, with whom they are in debate, and to accuse those that are formerly dead, with whom they have no contention nor strife? Verily *I* do believe that all the works which those men left to posterity, were profitably written, and that they were great and very holy men, and that that Law was made and published by Gods will and command: and although my skill and knowledge be but very little in books of that kind; yet this *I* can easily prove to be true unto one that bears an equall and an impartiall, and not an obstinate and a refractory mind; and *I* will do it, when thou wilt afford me an attentive and a courteous hearing, and mine own occasions will permit. But now is it not sufficient for me, howsoever that businesse goes,

not

not to have been beguiled nor deceived.

Chap. VI.

That the holy Scripture is first to be loved before it can be learned.

O *Honoratus*, I call mine own conscience and God, who inhabits pure souls, to witnesse, that I judge and esteem nothing to be more wise, nothing more chaste, nothing more religious then all those Scriptures be, which under the name of the Old Testament, are held and embraced by the Catholick Church. I know thou admirest to hear me talk thus, for I cannot disguise nor dissemble the matter, we have been exhorted and perswaded to believe far otherwise: but truly, a rasher act cannot be committed (rashnesse being a fault unto which we were addicted

dicted being yet but children) then to forsake the judgement of the Expositours of any kind of books, who professe that they can receive them, and can teach and deliver them to their disciples: and to require their judgement and opinion of them, who being constrained, I know not for what cause have denounced a most sharp and bitter warre against their authours and compilers? and that I may speak of those sciences wherein perhaps a Reader may erre without any heinous crime or offence, who ever thought that the exposition of the profound and obscure books of *Aristotle* ought to be received from his enemy? or who being desirous to learn the Geometry of *Archimedes*, would take *Epicurus* to be his master, against which he disputed very stiffely and eagerly, and yet (as I conceive) he understood nothing thereof? Are

those

thoſe Scriptures of the law moſt plain and eaſie, againſt which they proceed with violence in vain and to no purpoſe, as though they were expoſed and lay open to the capacity of the common people? I think theſe men are like to that woman which they themſelves do laugh at and deride, who being angry to hear the praiſes of the ſunne, and to have it recommended unto her by a certain Manichean woman to be worſhipped, as ſhe was religiouſly ſimple, ſtarts up upon a ſudden, and ſtamping often upon the place, which the ſunne with his beams had enlightned thorough a window, began to cry out, Behold I contemn and tread under foot the ſunne and thy God. That this was done altogether fooliſhly, and like unto a woman, no man can deny: but do not thoſe men ſeem to reſemble her, who caſting forth violent ſpeeches and curſes againſt the things

things they understand not, neither why they were written, nor what manner of things they be (which seem as though they were low and contemptible, but to them that understand them they are subtile and divine) think to receive some benefit thereby, because unskilfull men do countenance and applaud them? believe me whatsoever is contained in those Scriptures is high and divine: there is truth altogether in them, and most fit instruction both for the amending and reforming mens minds: and it is certainly so well digested and ordered, that every one may receive from thence that which is sufficient for himself, if he comes prepared to take it with such piety and devotion, as true Religion doth require. Should I go about to prove this unto thee I must alledge many reasons, and entertain thee with a longer discourse: for first

first I must perswade thee not to hate the Authours themselves, and then to love them: and this I must effect by any other means, rather then by expounding their opinions and their writings: and therefore if we did hate *Virgil*, yea if we did not love him upon the commendation of our Predecessours before we understood him, we should never be satisfied in those innumerable questions touching him wherewith Grammarians are wont to be much perplexed and troubled: nor should we give eare to any man that could resolve those questions to his honour and praise, but we should give countenance and shew favour unto him who by those questions would endeavour to shew that he erred and doted; but now when as many men do labour to expound them, and that after divers manners, and every one according to his skill and abi-

lity

lity, they receive the chiefest commendation and applause, by whose expositions he is found to be a better Poet, and he is conceived and believed even by those that understand him not, not onely to have committed no fault nor errour, but to have said nothing which doth not deserve much glory and praise: and therefore if a Master fails but in a small question, and knows not what to answer, we are rather angry and offended with him, then we will conceive that by any fault committed by *Maro* he is silent and dumb: but if a Master should in his own defence, affirm that so great an Authour hath committed a fault, he would loose so much credit and reputation thereby, that his Scholars would hardly continue with him even though he should hyre them with wages and rewards. How great a matter were it for us to give

so

ſo much credit to thoſe Writers by whoſe mouthes the Holy Ghoſt hath ſpoken as Antiquity confirmed by a long continuance doth teſtifie and declare? but we forſooth being very wiſe young men, and wonderfull ſearchers of reaſons, not having ſo much as peruſed thoſe books nor ſought out Maſters to expound them unto us, nor ſomewhat accuſed our own ſlowneſſe herein, nor held them to have any judgement or underſtanding who affirmed that thoſe works had for a long time been read, kept and expounded thorough the whole world, though that no credit was to be given unto them, being moved by their words, who were their enemies and offended with them, by whom we were enforced with a falſe promiſe of reaſon to believe and embrace unheard of millions of fables and tales.

CHAP.

Chap. VII.

That we ought not to judge rashly of the holy Scriptures: and how and with what care and diligence the true Religion is to be sought for.

But now if I can, I will accompliſh that which I have begun, and I will treat with thee after ſuch a ſort, that in the mean time I will not expound the Catholick Faith, but I will ſhew unto them that have a care of their ſouls ſome hope of divine fruit, and of finding out the Truth, to the end they may ſearch out the great myſteries and ſecrets of Faith. He that ſeeks after the true Religion, doth without doubt either believe already that the Soul is immortall, unto whom

that Religion may be commodious and profitable, or he desires to find her to be so in the same Religion; and therefore all Religion is for the souls sake: for the nature of the body howsoever it doth put him to no care and solicitude, especially after death, whose soul hath taken a course by which it may become blessed. Wherefore true Religion if there be any, was either onely one chiefly instituted for the souls sake: and this soul erres and is foolish, as we see, untill she gets and possesses wisdome, and that perhaps is the true Religion, if I seek out and enquire the cause of her erring, I find it to be a thing which is extremely hidden and obscure. But do I send thee to fables? or do I enforce thee to believe any thing rashly? I say our soul being entangled and drowned in errour and folly, seeks after the way of verity and truth, if there be any such to be

be found, if thou findeſt not thy ſelf thus inclined and diſpoſed, pardon me, and make me *I* pray thee, partaker of thy wiſdome: but if thou doeſt, let us, *I* beſeech thee, both together ſeek out the truth. *I*magine with thy ſelf that no notice had as yet been given unto us, nor no inſinuation made unto us of any Religion whatſoever. Behold we undertake a new work, and a new buſineſſe. Profeſſours of Religion are *I* believe to be ſought for, if there be no ſuch thing. Suppoſe then that we have found men of divers opinions, and in that diverſity ſeeking to draw every one unto them; but that in the mean time, ſome amongſt theſe do ſurpaſſe the reſt in renown of fame, and in the poſſeſſion of almoſt all people. Whether they embrace the truth or no it is a great queſtion; but are they not firſt to be examined and tried, that ſo long as we erre (for as

men we are ſubject to errour) we may ſeem to erre with mankind it ſelf? but thou wilt ſay, Truth is to be found but amongſt a few certain men: if thou knoweſt amongſt whom it is, why then thou knoweſt already what it is. Did not *I* ſay a little before that we would ſeek after the truth, as though we were yet ignorant thereof? but if by the force of truth thou doeſt conjecture that there be but few that embrace it, and yet thou knoweſt not who they be, what if thoſe few do lead and rule the multitude by their authority, and can dive into the ſecrets and myſteries of faith, and can make them in a manner plain and manifeſt? do we not ſee how few attain to the height of eloquence, and yet the ſchools of Rhetoricians do make a great noiſe throughout the whole world, with companies of young men? Do all thoſe that deſire to become good ora-

oratours, being terrified with the multitude of unskilfull men, think that they ought to addict themselves rather to the studie of the orations of *Cæcilius* and *Erucius*, then to those of *Tullius Cicero*? all men affect the things that are strengthened and confirmed by the authority of their ancestours. The simple sort of people endeavours to learn those things which a few learned men have delivered unto them to be learned: but very few there be that attain unto great eloquence, fewer there be that practise it, but fewest of all that grow eminent and are famous. What if true Religion be some such thing? what if a multitude of ignorant people frequents the Churches, it is no proof nor argument, that therefore none are made perfect by those mysteries? and yet if so few should studie eloquence, as there are few that become eloquent, our parents

would never think it fit to have us recommended unto such masters. When as therefore the multitude, which abounds with a number of unskilfull people, invites us to these studies, and makes us earnestly to affect that which few do obtain; why will we not admit that we have the like cause in Religion, the which peradventure we contemne and despise to the great perill and hazard of our souls? for if the most true and most sincere worship of God, though it be but amongst a few, yet it is amongst those with whom the multitude, though wholly addicted to their appetites and desires, and farre from the purity of knowledge and understanding, doth consent and agree, which without all doubt may come to passe: *I* ask, what answer are we able to give, if any one should reprove our rashnes & folly, for that having a great care to find out the

true

true Religion, we do not diligently search it out amongst the matters and teachers thereof? if I should say the multitude hath discouraged me. Why then hath it not disheartened men from the study of the liberall sciences which hardly yields any profit to this present life? why not from seeking after money and getting wealth? why not from obtaining dignities and honours? moreover, why not from recovering and preserving health? finally, why not from the desire of a blessed & an happy life? in all which affairs though many men be imployed, yet few there be that ate eminent and excell. You will say that the books of the Old Testament seemed to contain absurd things. Who are they that affirm it? namely enemies, for what cause or reason they did it, is not now the question; but yet they were enemies, you will say when you read them you understood so much

by your own reading. Is it so indeed? if thou hadst no skill in Poetrie at all, thou durst not take in hand *Terentianus Maurus* without a master; *Asper, Cornutus, Donatus*, and a multitude of other Authours are thought requisite for the understanding of any Poet, whose verses deserve no greater esteem then the approbation and applause of a stage: and thou without a guide doest undertake to reade those books, and without a master darest passe thy judgement upon them, which, howsoever they be, are notwithstanding by the confession of almost all mankind, published to be holy and replenished with divine matters: nor if thou findest some things therein which seem unto thee absurd, dost thou rather accuse the dulnesse of thy wit, and thy mind corrupted with the infection of this world (as the minds of all fools are) then those

books

books which peradventure by such kind of men cannot be well conceived and understood. Thou shouldst do well to seek out a man both pious and learned, or one that is esteemed and reputed so to be, by the approbation and consent of many; by whose instructions thou mightest become better, and more expert and skilfull by his learning. Such an one (saist thou) was not easie to be found; it would be some labour and trouble to seek him. There was none such in the land wherein thou didst dwell. If so, what cause could more profitably enforce thee to travell? if he lay hid in the continent or firm land, or were not there at all; thou shouldst sail beyond sea: if he were not there to be found by the shore, thou shouldest make a voyage even unto those lands, wherein the things which are contained in those books are said and reported to have been

done. O *Honoratus* have we done any ſuch thing? and yet when we were but moſt wretched and ſilly boyes we did at our own pleaſure, and in our own judgement, condemn a Religion, and that perhaps a moſt holy one (for I ſpeak, as yet, as though ſome doubt were to be made thereof) whoſe fame and renown hath already poſſeſſed the whole world. What if the things which ſeem in thoſe Scriptures offenſive to ſome that are ignorant and unskilfull, be for this cauſe ſo written and ſet down, that when ſuch things are read as agree not with the ſenſe of all ſorts of men, but much leſſe with theirs that are holy and wiſe, we may with more care and diligence ſeek out a ſecret and hidden meaning thereof? doeſt thou not ſee how men labour to interpret the paſtorall Catamite, upon whom the rough ſhepherd poured out his affections: and

how

how they affirm that the boy *Alexis* (upon whom *Plato* is also said to have made some love-verses) signifies I know not what great and mysterious matter, but that it surpasseth the judgement and understanding of unskilfull men: when as indeed that Poet abounding in his inventions may without any detestable crime or offence be conceived to have published lascivious songs? but were we indeed hindred and withdrawn from seeking out the true Religion, either by the publishing of some law against it, or by the power of them that oppose it, or by the contemptible shew and appearance of men dedicated to the service of God, or by any base or dishoneſt report; or by the newneſſe of the institution, or by some hidden profession thereof? No, no, none of these things did withdraw and hinder us: all laws both divine and humane do permit men to

seek

seek out the Catholick faith, and certainly it is lawfull according to humane law to hold & embrace it, if so long as we erre, we be uncertain of the divine law. We have no enemie that puts any fright or terrour into our weaknes: although truth and the salvation of our souls, if it be sought after, where it is lawful to seek it with most safety, and it cannot be found, ought to be enquired for with any danger and hazard whatsoever; the degrees of all powers & dignities do most devoutly impart their service unto this sacred and divine worship: and the very name of Religion is most honourable, and hath a very great esteem and renown. What hindereth us then at last to seek out carefully, and to examine with a pious and diligent search, whether here be that truth which though few do know and retain after the sincerest manner, yet the favour and good will of all nations doth conspire

therein? All this being so, imagine (as I said) that we now make our first enquiry what Religion we ought to embrace both for the cleansing and reforming of our souls. *Without doubt we must take our beginning from the Catholick Church,* for there are now more Christians then if the Jews were joyned with the worshippers of idols. And *whereas of the same Christians there be divers heresies, and all would have themselves thought to be Catholicks, and do call others besides themselves heretiks; the Church is one, as all do grant, greater in multitude, if thou considerest the whole world and (as those that know do affirm) more sincere in truth then all the rest; but as for truth it is another question. But that which is sufficient for those that seek it, is, that the Catholick Church is one upon which other heresies do impose divers names, when as*

every

every one of them is called by its proper name, which it dares not deny; whereby we may understand by the judgement of Arbitratours not hindred by any favour, unto whom the name Catholick, which all seek after, ought to be attributed. But leſt that any one ſhould think that this thing ought to be debated with much babling or ſuperfluous diſcourſe, there is one Church indeed wherein even the humane Laws are after a ſort Chriſtian. Yet I will have no preocupation of judgement to be drawn from hence but I judge it to be a moſt fit beginning for the ſeeking out of the truth. For there is no fear leaſt the true worſhip of God relying upon no proper force of its own, ſhould ſeem to ſtand in need to be upheld and ſupported by them whom it ought to ſuſtain and ſupport: but certainly it were a perfect happineſſe, if the Truth could

there

there be found, where with moſt ſecurity it may be ſought and retained: but if it cannot, it ought to be ſought for in another place, what danger and perill ſoever be incurred.

Chap. VIII.

Of the way to the inſtruction of piety, and of the wonderfull paine Saint Auguſtine took to find it out.

HAving thus reſolved and determined theſe things, which in my opinion are ſo right and juſt, that I ought to prevail in that cauſe with thee, whoſoever were againſt it: I will recount unto thee as well as I can, what courſe I took to find out the true Religion, when as I ſought it with ſuch a mind and reſolution as I have now declared that it ought to be ſought for. When I

was

was departed from thee beyond the Sea, now ſtaggering and doubting what I ought to embrace and what to reject (which doubting daily encreaſed in me from the time that I gave ear unto that man, whoſe coming unto us, was as thou knoweſt) promiſed as from heaven, for the reſolving of all the difficulties wherewith we were troubled, and I knew him to be a man like other men, but onely that he was eloquent, I held a great debate and deliberation with my ſelf being now in Italy, not whether I ſhould continue in that ſect into which I was ſorry and grieved that I had faln, but by what means I might find out the truth, for the love whereof thou canſt bear me witneſſe, how I ſighed and groaned. I was often of an opinion that it could not be found out, and the great waves of my thoughts and cogitations moved me to aſſent

to

to the Academicks. Oftentimes again when I considered as well as I could, that the mind of man is endued with such vivacity and naturall strength, with such wisdome and sharpnesse of wit, and with such quicknesse of judgement and understanding, I did not think that Truth could lye hidden and be concealed, but onely that the manner of Seeking it was hidden and unknown, and that that manner was to be received from some Divine Authority, it remained that I should enquire what that Authority was, when as in so great Dissensions and diversity of Opinions every one did promise that he would Teach and deliver it. Whereupon there occurred unto me an intricate Wood or Labyrinth into which it was very tedious and irksome to enter; and my mind remaining restlesse

leſſe amongſt theſe things, was toſſed to and fro with a great deſire of finding out the truth: yet nevertheleſſe by little and little I brake off from their company more and more whom I had already purpoſed to forſake, and there was nothing now remaining in ſo great perils and dangers, but that with tears and pittifull words, I ſhould beſeech the Divine Providence to aſſiſt and help me; and this I did deliver gently and carefully, and now I was almoſt ſhaken by ſome diſputations had with the Biſhop of Millan S. *Ambroſe*, *l.* 5. *conf. c.* 14. ſo that not without ſome hope I deſired to enquire many things touching the Old Teſtament, which (as thou knoweſt) being diſcommended and diſpraiſed unto us we abhorred and deteſted. And I had reſolved to remain ſo long a Catechumen in the Church unto which I was delivered by

by my parents, untill I could find out that which *I* desired, or could perswade my self that it ought not to be sought for. Wherefore if there had been any one then, that could have taught me, he might have found me a most apt scholar and very docible. *After this manner and with the like care and anxiety of thy soul thou seest that thou hast been long troubled and afflicted, and if thou seemest to thy self to have been already sufficiently tossed, and wouldest make an end of these labours and pains: Follow the way of the Catholick Discipline, which hath proceeded from Christ himself by his Apostles even unto us, and from hence shall descend and be conveyed to posterity.*

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

Of Credulity.

THou sayest my advice is foolish and ridiculous, seeing that all men do make it their profession to embrace and deliver Catholick doctrine. That all Hereticks do professe this I cannot deny, but after such a manner, that unto those which they entice and allure unto them, they promise to give a reason for the most hidden and most obscure things: and chiefly for this cause they blame and reprehend the Catholick Church, because those that approch and come unto her are commanded to believe: but they glory and boast that they impose not upon their followers the yoke of Faith and Believing, but open unto them the fountain it self of teaching and instruction. What (sayst thou) could be uttered or spo-

ken

ken more redounding to their praiſe and commendation? It is not ſo. This they promiſe having no power nor ability to perform it, but that by the name and pretence of reaſon they may winne and allure much company unto them; for the ſoul of man naturally rejoyceth at the promiſe of reaſon, and not having regard to her own forces and weakneſſe, by a deſire ſhe hath to eat the meats of thoſe that are in health (which are not prudently given to the infirm) ſhe haſtily falls upon the poyſon of the deceivers. But as for true Religion it can by no means be well and rightly received without ſome weighty command and force of authority, unleſſe thoſe things be firſt believed, which every one may afterwards attain unto, and learn if he carries himſelf well, and be thought worthy of it. Perhaps thou requireſt ſome reaſon hereof, whereby thou mayſt

mayst be induced and perswaded to believe that thou oughtest not sooner to be taught by reason, then by Faith and Belief. Which I can easily give unto thee, if thou wilt accept and receive it from me with an equall and impartiall mind. But that it may commodiously be done, I would have thee as it were answer to such questions as I shall propose unto thee. And first of all I would have thee to tell me: why dost thou conceive that we ought not to Believe? Because (sayst thou) credulity it self, from whence men are called credulous, seems unto me to be a certain vice, else it would not be a custome to object this name by way of reproch. For if a suspitious man be culpable and faulty, because he suspects things not certainly known: much more doth a credulous man deserve to be blamed, who differs herein from a suspitious man

man, that he that is ſuſpitious maketh ſome doubt in unknown things, but he that is credulous makes none at all. In the mean time I admit of this opinion and this diſtinction; but thou knoweſt alſo that we do not ſay a man is curious but by way of taunt and reproch, but when we call a man ſtudious, we ſpeak it in his praiſe and commendation: wherefore if you pleaſe, mark what difference you conceive to be between theſe two. Thou anſwereſt, that although both be moved with a great deſire of knowing, yet in this they differ, that the curious man enquires after the things that belong not unto him, but the ſtudious on the contrary after his own affairs. But we grant that a wife and children and their welfare do belong unto a man, and therefore if any one being gone a farre off out of his native ſoile ſhould make a diligent enquiry

of

of thoſe that come from his parts, how his wife and children do, he hath certainly a great deſire to know it, and yet we call not this a ſtudious man, although he be deſirous to know, and even thoſe things which do chiefly belong and appertain unto him. Wherefore now thou underſtandeſt that that definition of a ſtudious man is herein defective and imperfect: that every ſtudious man deſires to know the things that belong unto him, but that every man that hath ſuch a deſire ought not to be called a ſtudious man; but he who exceedingly ſeeks after the things which belong to excellent breeding, and to the adorning of the mind, we rightly call (in Latine) a Student, that is, a deſirous man, eſpecially if we adde what he deſires to hear. For we call one alſo ſtudious of his friends, that loves his friends onely: yet nevertheleſſe we think

think him not worthy of the common name of studious man without any addition. But one that desires to know how his friends do, I would not call him studious or desirous of hearing, unlesse having a good fame and credit he should often desire to hear the same thing, but if he should but once desire to hear it, I would call him a Student or desiring man. Now reflect upon a curious man, and tell me whether if any one should willingly hear a short tale not conducing at all unto his profit, that is, of things not belonging unto him, and this not with great eagernesse and often, but very seldome and very modestly, either in some banquet, or in some meeting or assembly, wouldest thou think him to be a curious man? I conceive not, but truly he that hath a care of that thing which he would willingly hear might seem indeed to be so. Where-

fore the definition alſo of a curious man ought to be corrected by the ſame Rule as is that of a ſtudious man. And therefore conſider alſo, whither the things formerly ſpoken ought to be amended. For why is he not unworthy of the name of a ſuſpitious man, who ſometimes ſuſpecteth ſomething, and he of a credulous man that ſometimes believeth ſomething? Wherefore as there is a very great difference between one that is deſirous of any thing, and one that is altogether ſtudious, and again between one that hath a care of a thing, and one that is curious: ſo is there between a believing man and a credulous man.

CHAP.

Chap. X.

Why credulity is the way to Religion.

But thou wilt say, Now see whither we ought to believe in Religion. For neither if we grant it to be one thing to believe, another to be credulous, doth it follow, that it is no fault to believe in matters of Religion: for what if it be a fault both to believe and to be credulous, as it is both to be drunk and to be a drunkard? whosoever thinks this to be certainly true, can in my opinion have no friend at all. For if it be a thing unreasonable to believe any thing, either he commits a foul fault that gives credit to his friend; or if he believes him not, I see not how he can call himself a friend, or the other. Here peradventure thou wilt say, I grant that something ought sometimes to be believed: now declare

how in Religion it is not a thing unreasonable to believe any thing before we know it, or understand it. I will if I can. Wherefore I ask thee, which doest thou conceive to be the greater fault, to instruct an unworthy person in Religion, or to believe that which is said by the instructors and teachers thereof? if thou understandest not whom I call an unworthy person: such an one I mean as comes to receive and embrace Religion with a feigned and dissembling heart. Thou granteſt, as I conceive, that it is a thing more worthy of blame to expound to such an one the holy mysteries of faith, then to give credit to religious men, affirming something of Religion it self. Neither would it become thee to give another answer. Wherefore now imagine with thy self, that the man were present who is to instruct thee in point of Religion: how wilt thou

make him believe that thou comest with a true and an unfeigned mind, and that thou usest no deceit nor dissimulation in this businesse? thou wilt say that upon thy good conscience thou feignest nothing, assuring it with all the words thou canst use, but yet with words. For being a man thou canst not so open the corners and secrets of thy mind to another man, that he may know thee inwardly. And if he shall say: Behold I do believe thee: but is it not more fit that thou also shouldst give credit unto me, seeing that if I hold and embrace any truth, thou art to receive the benefit thereof, and I to impart it? What answer shall we give, but that he ought to be believed? but saist thou, Had it not been better to alledge reason unto me, that I might follow it without any rashnesse whithersoever it should lead me? Perhaps it had been: but seeing that it

is ſo great a matter for thee to know God by reaſon, doeſt thou think that all men are capable of underſtanding the reaſons whereby the mind of man is led to the knowledge of divine things or the greater part of them. or but a few? I think, thou ſayſt, but a few. Doeſt thou believe that thou art in that number? Thou ſaiſt, It is not my part to anſwer to that queſtion. Thou thinkeſt then that it is his part alſo to believe thee in this matter: which he doth indeed. Onely let me put thee in mind, that he hath already twice given credit unto thee, ſpeaking uncertain things: and that thou wouldeſt not ſo much as once believe him, when he religiouſly warned and admoniſhed thee. But ſuppoſe this to be ſo, and that thou comeſt with a ſincere mind to embrace Religion, and that being one of thoſe few men, thou canſt underſtand the reaſons by

which

which the divine power is certainly known, doeſt thou think that Religion is to be denied to other men, that have not ſo great wits and judgements as thou haſt? or doeſt thou conceive that by little and little they ought to be led by certain degrees to thoſe chiefeſt ſecrets? thou plainly ſeeſt what courſe of proceeding is the more religious. For thou canſt not think that any man ought by any means to be forſaken or rejected in the deſire and affection of ſo great a matter. But art not thou of opinion, that unleſſe a man firſt believes, that he ſhall attain unto that which he intended, and bears an humble and a ſuppliant mind, and being obedient to certain great and neceſſary precepts, be very well purged and made clean by a certain courſe of life, he cannot otherwiſe obtain thoſe things that are purely true? indeed thou thinkeſt ſo. If then they, who by

certain reaſon can moſt eaſily conceive the divine myſteries, (one of which ſort I believe thee to be) ſhould proceed in this way, wherein thoſe walk that firſt do believe, would they receive any hurt thereby? I think not. But yet thou ſaiſt, what neceſſity is there of delay? becauſe, although by their proceedings they ſhall not prejudice themſelves at all, yet they will endamage others by their example. For there is hardly any one, that hath ſo high a conceit of himſelf as he can have; and he that thinks too humbly of himſelf, ought to be raiſed up, and he that thinks too high, ought to be repreſſed, that neither the one may be overcome by deſpair, nor the other caſt down headlong by boldneſſe and preſumption. Which is eaſily brought to paſſe, if even thoſe that are able to flie, ſhould a little be enforced to go, leſt any ſhould be dangerouſly

gerously invited thereunto, and thereby also a sufficient care may be had of others. This is the Providence of true Religion: this God himself hath appointed and commanded: this hath been delivered by our Predecessours of happy memory, this hath been observed even untill our dayes; to go about to overthrow this order, is nothing else but to seek out a sacrilegious way to true Religion. Which whosoever do, cannot attain unto that which they intend; though that be granted them which they desire: For *howsoever they surpasse and excell in wit, unlesse the divine Majesty doth aid and assist them, they creep upon the ground.* Which assistance he then affords when they that tend and walk towards him, have a care to proceed according to the course of humane society. Then which degree and step towards heaven nothing can be found

more

more firm and ſtable. Verily, ſuch is the force and efficacy of this reaſon, that I cannot reſiſt it, for how can I ſay, that nothing ought to be believed unleſſe it be known? beſides all friendſhip is taken away unleſſe ſomething may be believed which cannot be demonſtrated and proved by certain reaſon: and oftentimes without offence credit may be given to ſuch ſtewards as are ſervants to Lords. But in matters of Religion what can be done that is more unreaſonable and unjuſt, then that Gods Prelates ſhould believe us, when we promiſe that we come to embrace Religion with an unfeigned mind; and we refuſe to give credit unto them, when they teach and inſtruct us? Finally, what way can be more wholeſome and profitable, then by believing thoſe things which God hath appointed as preparatives for the cultivating and adoring the mind to be

first disposed, and made fit to understand and receive the truth? or if thou beest already sufficiently disposed thereunto, rather to go a little about, where thou maist walk with the greatest safety, then both to be the Authour of danger to thy self, and an example of temerity, and rashnesse unto others.

Chap. XI.

Of Understanding Belief and Opinion.

WE have shewed already how without offence we may follow those that command us to believe: it remains that we consider for what cause they are not to be followed that promise to conduct and lead us by reason. Some are of opinion that they can hearken and give eare to these promisers of reason, not onely without any blame or

dispraise,

dispraise, but also with some commendation and praise; but it is not so, for there be two sorts of persons that deserve praise in point of Religion: the one which hath already found out the true Religion, which we ought to judge most happy and blessed: the other which with the greatest care, and after the rightest manner, doth seek after it: the first sort is now in possession of it, the second is in the way, by which notwithstanding most certainly they will arrive at it. There be three other kinds of men which are indeed to be misliked and detested. The first is, of those that are opinative, that is, who think they know that which they know not. The second is, of those who truly do perceive their own ignorance, but do not so seek that they may find. The third is of those that neither think they know, nor have any will or desire to

seek.

ſeek. There are alſo three things in the minds of men, near as it were the one unto the other, moſt worthy to be diſtinguiſhed, to underſtand, to believe, and to think. Of which, if they be conſidered by themſelves, the firſt is alwaies without offence, the ſecond ſometimes faultie, the third never without a fault; and this we ought to reſerve to the ſame beatitude and felicity. For in this life how much ſoever a man knows, his knowledge doth not as yet make him moſt bleſſed, for that there be incomparably more things whereof he is ignorant. For to underſtand great and worthy, and divine things it is a moſt bleſſed thing. But it is not hurtfull to underſtand ſuperfluous things, but perhaps it was prejudicial to learn them, when as they took up the time of neceſſary things. Alſo it is not a miſerable thing to underſtand hurtfull things, but to do or ſuffer them.

For

For if any one understands how his enemie may be slain without endangering himself, he becomes not guilty by understanding it, if he desires it not: yea if he be free from such a desire, who is more innocent and guiltlesse then he? In believing a man is then to blame, when either he believes some unworthy thing of God, or gives too facile and easie credit unto the things reported of man. But in other things, if a man believes any thing, he commits no fault by believing, though he understands that he knows not the thing which he believes. For I believe that in times past, most wicked conspiratours were put to death by the power and authority of *Cicero*: but this I do not ogely not know, but also I know assuredly that I can by no means attain unto the knowledge thereof. To be opinative or to be led by opinion, is for two causes an unseemly

seemly thing: First, because he cannot learn a thing, if it be to be learned, that hath perswaded himself that he knows it already. And secondly, for that rashnesse is of it self a sign or token of an ill disposed minde. For although any one thinks that he knows that which I said touching *Cicero* (as there is nothing that can hinder him from learning it) yet because he can have no certain knowledge of it, and for that he understands not, That there is a great difference, whither any thing be comprehended by certain reason of mind, which we say is to understand, or whither it be committed to common fame or writing, to be profitably believed by posterity, he erres indeed; and there is no errour but hath its foulnesse and deformity. Wherefore that we understand we attribute it to reason: that we believe, to authority; and that we are opinative,

to errour and mistaking: but every one that understands doth also believe: and so doth every one that is opinative: but not every one that believes, understands: and no man understands that is opinative. If therefore these three kinds be referred to those five sorts of men whereof we made mention a little before, to wit, to the two approved kinds which we put in the first place, and to the other three vicious kinds; we find that the first kind (which is those that are happy) doth believe truth it self: and that the second kind (which is those that are desirous and lovers of truth) doth believe authority: in both which kinds the believers deserve praise. But in the first of the vicious kinds (that is of those that think they know that which they know not) there is indeed a faulty credulity. The other two disallowed kinds (that is, both

those

those that seek after truth with a despair of finding it out, and they that seek not after it) do believe nothing; and this is onely in things belonging to some doctrine or discipline, for how a man can believe nothing in the other actions of his life I understand not. Albeit even amongst those that affirm that in their actions they follow probable opinions, some there be that will seem rather not able to know any thing, then to believe nothing. For who doth not believe that which he doth approve? Or how is that which they follow profitable, if it be not approved? Wherefore there may be two kinds of those that oppose the truth: the one that opposeth knowledge onely, and not faith: the other that condemneth both the one and the other. But whither any can be found that use such proceedings in humane affairs, I am wholly ignorant. These things

things are ſpoken that we may underſtand, that believing the things which we do not as yet fully know nor underſtand, we are vindicated and defended from the raſhneſſe and temerity of opinative men. As for them that ſay that we ought to believe nothing, but that which we know, they have onely regard to the name of opinion, which I confeſſe is but baſe and ignominious: but if any one will conſider attentively, that there is a very great difference between theſe two things, whither a man thinks that he knows a thing, or whither being moved by ſome authority, he believes that which he underſtands that he knows not, he ſhall certainly ſhun and avoid the crime both of errour, inhumanity and pride.

Obſervation.

S. *Auguſtine* in his firſt book of

of Retractations and fourteenth Chapter, would have those words. (*The one which hath already found out the true Religion which we ought to judge most happy and most blessed*) so to be understood, that they are most blessed not in this life, but in that which we hope for, and unto which we go by the way of Faith, for (saith he) they are to be conceived to have found out that which is to be sought for, who are there already, whither we by seeking and believing, that is by embracing the way of Faith do desire to arrive.

And again he affirms that those words: To understand great and worthy and divine things, it is a most blessed thing, ought to be referred to eternall beatitude.

And upon these words: (There is a great difference whither any thing be comprehended by certain reason of mind, which we say, is

to

to understand: or whither it be committed to common fame, or writing to be profitably believed by posterity;) and upon these: (That we understand we attribute it to reason: that we believe to authority) he maketh this explication: This is not so to be understood that in common discourse we should be afraid to say we know that which we believe by credible witnesses, for when we speak properly, we are onely said to know that which we comprehend by firm reason of mind. But when we speak with words more fit to be commonly used, as the Scripture also speaketh, we make no doubt to say, that we know both that which we perceive by our corporall senses, and which we believe upon the report of credible witnesses, but yet so that we understand what differenee there is between the one and the other.

CHAP.

Chap. XII.

That it is the ſafeſt way to Believe Wiſe men.

IF that which is not known ought not to be believed, I ask then how can children obey parents and embrace them with mutuall love and affection, whom they may believe not to be their parents; for that who is their father, it cannot be known by reaſon, but it is believed upon the word and authority of the Mother: and as for the Mother, ſhe often is not believed, but Midwives, Nurſes and Servants: For if her child may be ſtoln from her and another put in the place, cannot ſhe deceive being deceived? and yet notwithſtanding we believe, and that without any doubt and ſtaggering at all, that which we confeſſe we cannot know: and unleſſe this were

ſo,

ſo, who ſees not but that Piety the moſt holy tye and bond of mankind would be violated and defiled by a moſt proud wickedneſſe and offence? For who, though he be a mad man, can think him worthy of blame, who doth perform his obliged duties unto thoſe whom he believes to be his parents, although indeed they were not? On the contrary, who will not think fit to have him caſt out of the ſociety of men, who will not love thoſe which perhaps are his true parents, for fear leſt he ſhould love thoſe that are falſe ones? Many arguments may be brought to ſhew that nothing at all remains ſafe and ſecure in humane ſociety, if once we are reſolved to believe nothing which we cannot know nor underſtand. But now hear that whereby I am confident I ſhall at the preſent more eaſily draw and perſwade thee, that ſeeing the queſtion

ſtion is concerning Religion, that is about the worſhip of God, and the knowledge of Divine things) thoſe are leſſe to be followed, and hearkned unto, who moſt readily promiſing reaſon, do forbid and prohibite us to believe. No man doubts, but that all men are either fools or wiſe men; I call not thoſe wiſemen here, that are prudent, ingenious, and witty, but thoſe that are endued with as firm and certain a knowledge both of Divine and Humane things as man is capable to receive, and do lead their lives and frame their manners conformable thereunto: but as for others, how learned or unlearned ſoever they be, or whither they deſerve to be praiſed or diſpraiſed for the manner of their lives, I repute and account them in the number of fools: which being ſo, what man, though but of a ſlender underſtanding doth not plainly ſee, that

it

it is more wholesome and profitable for fools to obey the precepts and commands of wise men, then to frame and order their lives according to their own judgements and fancies? For every thing that is done, if it be not rightly done, it is a fault: nor can any thing be by any means rightly done, which doth not flow and proceed from right reason; now right reason is virtue it self; But amongst what sorts of men is virtue to be found, but in the mind of a wise man? wherefore the wiseman onely offends not; but every fool offends, unlesse it be in those actions wherein he doth obey a wise man; for such actions do proceed from right reason, nor is the fool to be accounted Master (as I may say) of his own actions, he being as it were but the instrument or servant of the wise man. Wherefore if it be better for all men not to

of-

offend then to offend: verily all fools would live better if they could be servants to wise men. And if this without doubt be fit and expedient in things of lesse moment, as in buying or tilling a field, in marrying a wife, in the education and breeding of children, and finally in the managing of private affairs: much more is it expedient in matters of Religion. For Humane things are both more easie to be known then Divine: and in all things that are more holy and more excellent, we sinne so much the more grievously and dangerously, by how much we owe unto them a greater honour, reverence and respect. Wherefore thou seest that from hence forth there remains nothing more for us to do, so long as we are fools, but, if we desire to lead a good and a religious life, to seek out wise and prudent men, that by obeying of them

we may not so much feel the dominion of folly, whilst it is in us, and at the length we may become wise men our selves.

An Observation.

S. *Augustine* in his first book of Retractions, and fourteenth chapter advertiseth that his division of men into wise men and fools, is to be understood of men after they come to the use of reason, whereby they are distinguished from beasts, as we say all men desire to be blessed, wherein little children cannot be included for they cannot yet desire it.

Chap. XIII.

That Religion takes her beginning from Believing.

HEre again ariseth a question of great difficulty: for how shall

shall we that are fools be able to find out a wise man, seeing that divers do indifferently challenge that name unto themselves, although almost none dare presume to do it openly, when as they do so disagree amongst themselves about those things, in the knowledge whereof wisdome doth consist, that it is necessary to think that either none of them are wise men, or that there is but one certain wiseman. But when a fool enquires who that is, truly I see not by what means he can be plainly discerned and perceived: for a man cannot know any thing by any signs whatsoever, unless he knows the thing it self, whereof these be the signs; but a fool knows not wisdome. For wisdome is not like gold and silver and such like things, which thou mayest both know when thou seest, and yet not enjoy and possesse them: he that

wants wiſdome cannot ſee nor behold it with the eye of his mind: for all the things which we perceive with our corporall ſenſes, are outwardly propoſed and preſented unto us; and therefore we may behold ſtrange and externall things with our eyes, albeit we have not any of the things, nor any thing of that kind: but that which is perceived by the underſtanding, is inwardly in the mind, and it is nothing elſe to have it, but to ſee and behold it. But a fool wants wiſdome, and therefore knowes it not, for he cannot ſee it with his eyes; for he cannot ſee it and not have it: and he cannot have it and ſtill continue and remain a fool: wherefore he knows it not, and whilſt he knows it not, he cannot know it in another place: and therefore no man ſo long as he remains a fool, can by moſt certain knowledge find out a wiſe man, by obeying of whoſe

whose precepts and commands he may be freed from so great an evil as folly is. Now it is God onely that can give satisfaction to this mighty difficulty, and afford remedy for this great evil; and because our question is about Religion, unlesse we both believe that there is a God, and that he gives assistance to humane minds, we ought not indeed to inquire and seek for true Religion. For what do we desire to find out at length by so great an endeavour? What wish we to attain unto? Whither do we long to arrive? Is it unto that thing which we believe not to have a being, nor to belong and appertain unto us? Nothing is more perverse then such a mind. When thou durst not beg a favour of me, or with impudence durst crave one, dost thou come to demand how Religion may be found out, when thou thinkest not that there is a God.

and that we care not whither there be any or no? What if it be so great a matter, that unlesse it be diligently sought for, and with all might and power it cannot be found out? What if the extream difficulty of finding out the meaning and understanding of that which shall be found out doth vex and trouble the mind of the seeker? For what is more pleasant and familiar to our eyes, then this light is? and yet after long obscurity and darknesse they cannot endure it. What is more fit and commodious for a body that is consumed and exhausted with sickneſſe, then meat and drink? Yet we see that those that are upon recovery are restrained and kept back that they may not presume to feed so plentifully as well men do, lest by a full diet they should return to their former disease. I speak of those that are recovering their health: but what

what do we not enforce the ſick men themſelves to eat ſomething? which is ſo great a trouble unto them, that certainly they would not obey us, did they not believe that they ſhall eſcape that ſickneſſe thereby. When therefore wilt thou ſettle thy ſelf to a moſt painfull and laborious ſearch? When wilt thou adventure to take ſo great care and labour upon thee, as this buſineſſe doth deſerve, when as thou doſt not believe that there is any ſuch thing as that which thou ſeekeſt? Wherefore it was rightly inſtituted and ordained by the majeſty of Catholick diſcipline, that before all things they ſhould be induced and perſwaded to believe, that come to receive and embrace Religion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

That Christ himself chiefly exacted belief.

SEeing my discourse is concerning those that desire to be called Christians, I pray tell me what reason can that heretick alledge unto me? What can he say to draw me from Believing, as from a rash and inconsiderate thing? If he commands me to believe nothing, then do I not believe that there is any true Religion in the world: and because I do not believe that there is any such thing, I do not seek after it. But he (as I conceive) will shew it to the seeker; For so it is written: He that seeks shall find. Wherefore I would not come to him that forbids me to believe, unless I believed something. Is there any greater madness, then that I should displease

pleaſe them onely with a belief which is ſupported by no knowledge, and yet that belief alone hath brought me to the ſelf ſame man? What ſhall I ſay, but that all Hereticks do exhort us to believe Chriſt? Can they be more oppoſite and contrary to themſelves? Wherein they are to be preſſed two manner of wayes. Firſt they are to be asked, where is the reaſon which they promiſed, where the reprehenſion and blaming of raſhneſſe, where the preſumption of ſcience and knowledge? for if it be an abſurd thing to believe anyone without reaſon, why doſt thou expect, why doſt thou go about to have me believe any one without reaſon, that I may more eaſily be led by thy reaſon? Will thy reaſon build any thing that is firm & ſtable upon the foundation of temerity & raſhneſſe? I ſpeak according to them whom we diſcontent & diſpleaſe by belie-

ving. For to believe before reaſon, when thou art not yet fit to conceive and underſtand it, and by faith it ſelf to prepare the mind to receive the ſeeds of verity and truth, I judge it to be not onely a moſt wholſome and profitable thing, but alſo ſo neceſſary, that thoſe that have ſick and feeble minds cannot recover their healths without it: which becauſe they conceive to be a ridiculous thing and full of raſhneſſe, it is impudently done of them to perſwade and exhort us to believe Chriſt. Moreover, I confeſſe that I have already believed Chriſt, and have perſwaded my ſelf, that that is true which he hath ſaid, although this my belief be ſupported by no reaſon. This is the firſt leſſon O heretick which thou wilt teach me; but becauſe I have not ſeen Chriſt himſelf, how he vouchſafed to appear amongſt men, who is publickly re-

reported to have been seen even by the eyes of common people, give me leave a little to consider with my self upon whose words I have believed, that there was a Christ; that being already guarded and fortified by such a faith, I may give ear and hearken unto thee; I perceive that I believed and gave credit unto none, but to a setled and confirmed opinion, and to a most renowned fame and report of people and nations: these people also I see in all places to be in possession of the secrets and mysteries of the Catholick Church. Why shall not I then chiefly enquire of them diligently what Christ hath commanded, by whose authority being moved, I have already believed that Christ hath commanded some profitable thing? Wilt thou better expound unto me what Christ hath said? whom I would not think to have been, or now to be,

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if thou didſt recommend it unto me to be believed. This therefore (as I ſaid) have I believed upon a famous report of men, confirmed with conſent and antiquity: but you who are both ſo few, and ſo turbulent, and ſo new, it is certain you can produce and bring forth nothing which may deſerve credit and belief. And therefore what a madneſſe is this in thee (to ſay) Believe them (the known multitude of Chriſtendome) that we ought to believe Chriſt, but learn of us (Manicheans) what Chriſt hath ſaid: Why ſo I beſeech thee? Verily, if that known multitude ſhould fail, and could teach me nothing: I ſhould much more eaſily perſwade my ſelf, that I ought not to believe Chriſt at all, then that I ought to believe any thing concerning him of any others, but of thoſe by whoſe means I firſt believed him. O mighty con-

fidence

fidence, or rather folly! I will (ſayſt thou) teach thee what Chriſt hath commanded, in whom thou art already perſwaded to believe. What if I did not believe in him at all, couldeſt thou teach me any thing concerning him? But (ſayſt thou) it behooves thee to believe. What, upon your warrant and recommendation? No (ſayſt thou) for we do by reaſon lead thoſe which do already believe in Chriſt. Why then ſhall I believe in him? Becauſe it is a grounded report, was it grounded upon you, or upon others? Upon others ſayſt thou. Shall I believe them firſt, and be afterwards taught and inſtructed by thee? Peradventure I ought to do ſo, were I not above all things admoniſhed by them not to come at all unto thee: for they ſay that you hold pernicious doctrines. Thou wilt anſwer, they lie. How then may I believe them, con-

concerning Christ whom they have not seen: if I may not believe them concerning thee whom they will not see? Here sayest thou, Believe the Scriptures. But all Scripture, if being new and unheard of, it be alledged or commended but by a few, and hath no reason to confirm it, receives no credit nor authority at all, but those that alledge it: wherefore if you that are so few and unknown commend those Scriptures unto me, I refuse to believe them: besides also you proceed against your promise, rather by commanding belief, then giving any reason thereof. Here again (for the authority of Scriptures) thou wilt call me back to the known multitude of Christendome, and to common report. Restrain at length thy obstinacy, and I know not what unruly appetite of worldly fame: and rather admonish me to seek out the chief rulers of this known

known multitude, and to enquire for them diligently and painfully, that rather I may learn ſomething of them touching theſe Scriptures: who if they were not I ſhould not know whither any thing ought to be learnt at all or no. As for thee, return into thy corner and lurking-hole, and delude us no more under a ſhew and pretence of truth, which thou endeavoureſt to take away from them, unto whom thou granteſt authority and credit: and if they alſo deny, that we ought not to believe Chriſt, unleſſe an undoubted reaſon can be rendred thereof, they are not Chriſtians. For certain Pagans do alledge that againſt us, fooliſhly indeed, but yet not contrary nor repugnant to themſelves. But who can endure that thoſe men ſhould profeſſe that they belong to Chriſt, who ſtrongly affirm that nothing ought to be believed, unleſſe moſt evi-

evident reaſon can be given even unto fools, concerning God and divine matters? But we ſee that Chriſt himſelf (as that hiſtory teacheth which they alſo believe) deſired nothing more principally, nor more earneſtly, then that he might be credited and believed: when as they with whom he was to treat about thoſe affairs were not yet fit to learn and conceive the divine myſteries. For to what other purpoſe did he work ſo great and ſo many miracles, he himſelf alſo affirming that they were done for no other end, but that men might give credit and beliefe unto him? He led the ſimple ſort of people by belief: you lead them by reaſon: he cryed out that he might be believed, you cry out againſt it: he commended thoſe that did believe, you blame and reprehend them. But unleſſe he had turned water into wine, to omit his

other miracles, could men have been brought to follow him, if he had done no such things, but onely taught and instructed them? Or is that word of his not to be regarded: 1 *Joh.* 14. 1. Believe God and believe me: Or is he to be blamed for rashnesse in belief, who would not have Christ come into his house, because he believed that by his command onely his sick sonne conld be cured? *Mat.* 8. 8. *He therefore bringing a medicine which was to cure the most corrupt manners, did by miracles winne authority, by authority deserved belief, by belief drew together a multitude by a multitude obtained antiquity by antiquity strengthened and confirmed Religion: which not onely the most foolish novelty of hereticks endeavouring by deceits, but neither the antient errour of the Gentlies being violently bent against it, could in any part abolish or destroy.*

CHAP.

Chap. XV.

Of the most commodious way to Religion.

WHerefore albeit I am not able to teach thee, yet do I not ceaſe to warn and admoniſh thee, that (becauſe many men will ſeem to be wiſe, and it is not eaſie to diſcern whither they be fools or no) thou beſeecheſt the divine Majeſty with very much earneſtneſſe, and fervent deſires, with ſighs and ſobs, or alſo (if it be poſſible) with weeping and tears, to free and deliver thee from the evil of errour, if thou deſireſt to lead a bleſſed and an happy life. Which may more eaſily be brought to paſſe, if thou wilt willingly obey his commands which he hath been pleaſed to have confirmed and ſtrengthened by ſo great an authority of the Catholick Church.

Church. For seeing that a wise man is by his mind so united unto God that nothing is interpoled and set between them, which may divide and separate them, (for God is truth, and no man is to be accounted a wise man that doth not attain to the knowledge of truth) we cannot deny but that the wisdome of man is interposed as a certain medium between his folly and the most sincere truth of the Divine Majesty. For a wise man according to the ability which he hath received, doth imitate God: and a fool hath nothing nearer unto him which he may profitably imitate and follow, then a wise man: when because (as I said) it is not easie to understand by reason, it was necessary that certain miracles should be propoled and set before mens eyes (which fools do use much more commodiously then their understandings) to the end that the

the life and manners of men moved with authority, might first be purged and made clean, and so they might be enabled to understand reason. And therefore when as man was to be imitated, and yet no confidence to be placed in him: how could the Divine Majesty shew greater signs of his favour and liberality, then that the sincere, eternall, and unchangeable wisdome of God, unto whom it behoves us to cleave and adhere, should vouchsafe to take humane nature upon him? who did not onely do those things, which might serve to invite us to follow God: but did also endure and suffer those things, whereby we were discouraged from following of him. For whereas no man can obtain the most certain and chiefest good, unlesse he doth fully and perfectly love it, (which by no means will be brought to passe so long as men fear the

the miseries of the body, and the things that are subject to fortune and chance) he by his wonderfull birth and admirable works hath purchased for us love and charity: and hath excluded terrour and fear by his death and resurrection. And finally he hath shewed himself to be such an one in all other things (too long to be here expressed and set down) that we may know and perceive hereby how farre the divine clemency can reach and be extended, and how farre mans infirmity can be elevated and extolled.

Chap. XVI.

That Miracles do procure Belief.

THis, believe it, is a most wholesome authority: this at the first is a withdrawing of our minds from an earthly habitation: this is a conversion from the love of this world

to

to the true God. It is onely authority which moveth fools to make haſte unto wiſdome. So long as we cannot underſtand ſincere things, it is indeed a miſerable thing to be deceived by authority: but truly it is more miſerable, not to be moved thereby. For if the Divine Providence doth not rule and govern humane affairs, we ought not to buſie and trouble our ſelves about Religion: but if even the frame and ſpecies of all things, which we muſt believe proceeds and flows from ſome fountain of the trueſt beauty, doth as it were publickly and privately exhort all the more noble and braver ſpirits both to ſeek God, in I know not what inward conſcience and to ſerve him: we ought not to deſpair, but that the ſame God hath conſtituted and ordained ſome authority, upon which if we lean and rely as upon a ſure ſtep, we may be ele-

elevated and lifted up unto him. This authority, (reaſon being ſet aſide, which to underſtand to be true and ſincere, it is a very hard matter for fools to do, as I have often ſaid) doth move and excite us two manner of wayes: partly by miracles, and partly by the great number and multitude of followers. It is certain that a wiſe man needs none of theſe things, but now we are diſcourſing how we may become wiſe men, that is, how we may cleave and adhere unto the truth: which is a thing that doubtleſſe cannot be done with a foul and impure mind: the uncleanneſſe whereof, is (to expound it briefly) the love of all things whatſoever beſides it ſelf and God: from which filth by how much any one is more purged and cleanſed, by ſo much the more eaſily doth he behold the truth. And therefore to deſire to ſee the truth that thou mayſt

cleanſe

cleanſe the mind, when therefore it ought to be cleanſed, that thou mayeſt ſee the truth, is certainly a perverſe and a prepoſterous thing. Wherefore to a man that is not able to behold the truth that he may be made fit to ſee it, and may ſuffer himſelf to be purged and cleanſed, authority is at hand, which without doubt receives her ſtrength and vigour partly by miracles, and partly by the number and multitude of followers, as I ſaid a little before. A miracle I call any hard or unwonted thing whatſoever, which appears above the expectation and power of the wonderer. In which kind nothing is more fit for the common people, and for men that are abſolutely ſottiſh and fooliſh, then that which is applyed and propoſed to the ſenſes. But theſe again are divided into two ſorts: for ſome there be that onely move men to wonder and

and admiration: and others which beſides do winne and purchaſe great favour and good will. For if any one ſhould ſee a man fly, he would onely wonder at it, becauſe it is a thing which beſides the beholding of it, yields to the ſpectatour no commodity nor profit. But if any one being afflicted with a grievous and deſperate ſickneſſe, ſhall ſo ſoon as the diſeaſe is commanded to depart, recover his health, he ſhall overcome the wonder of the cure by the charity of the curer. Such things were done as many as were ſufficient, when God appeared to men in the ſhape of a true man: The ſick were cured, *Mat.*9.6, 13, 15, 16. *Mat.*9. 7, 22. *Mar.*3.5, 10. *Joh.*4.53. the leaprous were cleanſed; *Mat.*8.3. *Mar.*4, 2. *Luke* 5.3. & 7.22. going was reſtored to the lame, *Mat.* 11.5. ſight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, *Luke* 18.42. *Joh.*9.7.

The men of that time ſaw water turned into wine, *Joh.* 2. 9. five thouſand people filled with five loaves of bread, *Mat.* 14. 20, 21. men walking upon the ſea *Mat.* 14. 25. *Joh.* 6. 19. & 21. 7. and the dead riſing from death to life, *Luke* 7. 15. & 8. 55. So ſome miracles were done for the cure of the body by a more manifeſt benefit, and ſome for the cure of the ſoul by a more hidden ſign, but they were all for the help of mankind by the teſtimony of the Divine Majeſty: thus did the Divine Majeſty then draw unto it the ſtraying ſouls of mortall men. Why (ſayſt thou) are not theſe things done now? Becauſe they would not move unleſſe they were wonderfull, and if they were common and uſuall they were not wonderfull. For bring unto me a man when he firſt ſees the courſes of day and night, and the moſt conſtant order of celeſtiall things

things, the 4. changes of the yeare, the falling and returning of the leeves unto the trees, the infinite vertue of ſeeds, the beauty of light, the varieties of colours, ſounds, ſmels and taſts, and if wee can but ſpeak with him, we ſhall find him wholly aſtoniſhed, and quite overcome with the ſight of theſe miracles: and yet we deſpiſe and we make and account of al theſe things, not becauſe they are eaſily known (for what is more obſcure then the cauſes of them?) but for that we are accuſtomed frequently to ſee them, thoſe things are therefore moſt fitly done, that a multitude of beleevers being gathered together and propagated by them profitable authority might be converted into cuſtomes themſelves.

An obſervation.

S. Auguſtine in his firſt book of his Retractations and 14. Chapter

alledgeth theſe words: (why ſayſt thou) are not theſe things done now? becauſe they would not move, unleſſe they were wonderfull, and if they were common and uſuall, they were not wonderfull) and expounds them thus: This I ſaid becauſe not ſo great nor all miracles are done now, but not that none are alſo now done.

Chap. XVII.

The Conſent of Nations beleeving in Chriſt.

All cuſtomes have ſuch vertue power to winn the love and affection of men, that we ſooner can condemne and deteſt even the things that are naught and wicked in them then forſake or change them: and this for the moſt part comes to paſſe, when as our unlawfull appetites and deſeres haye gotten a dominion and pre-

predominancy over us : doeſt not thou think that great care hath been taken about the affaires of mankinde, and that they are put into a good ſtate and condition, that not only divers moſt learned men doe argue and contend, that nothing that is earthly, nothing that is fierie finally, nothing that is perceptible by the corporall ſenſes ought to be worſhipped and adored for God, but that he is to be prayed unto, entreated and ſupplicated only by the underſtanding or intellectuall power : but alſo that the unskilfull multitude of both ſexes doth in ſo many and ſo divers nations both beleeve it and publiſh it? *that there is continency and forbearance of meates, even to the moſt ſlender diet of bread and water, and faſtings, not for one day only, but alſo continued for divers dayes together : that there is chaſtity even to the contempt of mar-*

riage and issue : that there is patience even to the contemning of crosses and flames : that there is liberality even to the distribution of patrimonies to the poore : and finally, so great a disesteeme and contempt of all things that are in this world, that even death it self is wished and desired. Few there are that do these things, fewer that doe them well and prudently : yet the people doe approve them, hearken unto them, and like them : yea they love and affect them; and not without some progresse of their mindes towards God, and certain sparks of piety and vertue, they blame and reprehend their owne weakenesse and imbecillity that they cannot doe these things. This the divine Providence hath brought to passe by the predictions of the Prophets, by the humanity and doctrin of Christ, by the voyages of the Apostles, by the

the contumelies, crosses, bloud and death of Martyrs, by the laudable and excellent lives of Saints, and by miracles done at convenient times in all these things worthy of so great matters and vertues. *When as therefore we see so great help and assistance from God, and so great fruit and encrease thereby, shall we make any doubt or question at all of retyring into the besome of that Church, which even to the confession and acknowledgement of mankinde from the Sea Apostolike by succession of Bishops, hath obtained the sovereignty and principall authority, heretiks in vain barking round about it, and being condemned partly by the judgement of the people themselves, partly by the gravity of Councels, partly also by the majesty and splendour of miracles?* Unto which not to graunt the chiefe place and preheminence, is either indeede an extreme impiety,

or a very raſh and a dangerous arrogancy, for if there be no certain way for the minds of men to wiſdome and ſalvation, but when faith prepareth and diſpoſeth them to reaſon; what is it elſe to be ungraetfull unto the divine Majeſty for his aide and aſſiſtance, but to have a will to reſiſt an authority which was gained and purchaſed with ſuch labour and paines? And if every art and trade, though but baſe and eaſy, requires a teacher or maſter that it may be learned and underſtood: what greater expreſſion can there be of raſh arrogancy and pride, then both to have no minde to learne the books of the divine myſteries from their interpreters, and yet to have a minde to condemne the unknown.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Concluſion by way of exhortation,

WHerefore if either reaſon or our diſcourſe hath any wayes moved thee: and if thou haſt a true care of thy ſelf (as I beleeve thou haſt) I would have thee to hearken and give eare unto me, and with a pious faith, a cheerefull hope, and ſincere charity to addreſſe thy ſelf to good Maſters of Catholick Chriſtianity: and to pray unto God without ceaſing and intermiſſion: by whoſe only goodneſſe we were made and created, by whoſe juſtice we are puniſhed and chaſtized, and by whoſe clemency we are freed and redeemd, by which means thou ſhalt neither want the inſtructions and diſputations of moſt learned men, and thoſe that are truly Chri-

ſtian, nor books, nor cleare and quiet thoughts, whereby thou mayſt eaſily find that which thou ſeekeſt. And as for thoſe verball and wretched men (for how can I ſpeake more mildly of them) forſake them altogether: who found out nothing but miſchiefe and evill, whilſt they ſeek to much for the ground thereof. In which queſtion they ſtirre up oftentimes their hearers to enquire and ſearch, but they teach them thoſe things when they are ſtirred up, that it were better for them alwayes to ſleep, then to watch and take great pains after that manner, for they drive them out of a lethargy or drowſy evill and make them frantike: between which diſeaſes, whereas both are moſt commonly mortall: yet nevertheleſſe there is this difference, that thoſe that are ſicke of a lethargy doe die without troubling or moleſting others: but the frantike

tike man is dreadfull and terrible unto many, and unto thoſe eſpecially that ſeek to aſſiſt him. For neither is God the author of evill, nor hath it ever repented him to have made any thing, nor is he troubled with a ſtorme of any commotion or ſtirring of the minde, nor is a particle or piece of earth his kingdome: he neither approves nor commands any heinous crimes or offences, he never lies. For theſe and ſuch like things did move and trouble us, when they did ſtrongly oppoſe them and inveigh againſt them, and fained this to be the doctrine of the old Teſtament which is a moſt abſolute falſhood and untruth. Wherefore I graunt that they doe rightly blame and reprehend thoſe things. What then have I learned? what thinkeſt thou, but that when they reprove thoſe things, the Catholike doctrine is not reprehended? ſo that the truth

which

which I learned amongſt them, I hold and reteyne: and that which I conceived to be falſe and untrue, I refuſe and reject but the Catholick Church hath alſo taught me many other things, whereunto thoſe men being pale and without bloud in their bodies, both groſſe and heavy in their underſtandings cannot aſpire, namely that God hath no body, that no part of him can be perceived by corporall eyes, that nothing of his ſubſtance and his nature is any wayes violable or changeable, or compounded or framed, which things if thou graunteſt me to be true (as wee ought not to frame any other conceit of the divine Majeſty) all their ſubtle deviſes and ſhifts are ſubverted and overthrnown. But how it can be, that God hath neither cauſed nor done any evill, and that there neither is, nor ever hath been any nature and ſubſtance, which he

he hath not either produced or made, and yet that he frees and delivers us from evill, is a thing approved upon so necessarie reasons and grounds, that no doubt at all can be made thereof: especially by thee and such as thou art, if so be that to their good wits they joyne piety, and a certaine peace and tranquillity of a minde, without which nothing at all of so great matters can be conceived and understood, and here is no report of great and large promises made to no purpose, and of I know not what Persian fable, a tale more fit to be told to Children then to ingenious and witty men, and as for truth it is a farre other thing then the Manichees do fooliſhly imagine and conceive, but because I have made a farre longer discourse then I thought to have done, let me here end this booke: wherein I would have thee to remember that I have

not

not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and impugne those toyes: nor to have expounded any great matter of the Catholick doctrine, but that my only intent was to have rooted out of thee if *I* could, the false opinion of true Christians which hath been malitiously or unskilfully insinuated unto us, and to stirre thee up to the learning of certaine great and divine things. Wherefore *I* will put a period to this worke: and if it makes thy mind more quiet and contented I shall peradventure be more ready to serve thee in other things.

F I N I S.

Saint *Auſtins* Care for the Dead.

OR

HIS BOOK

De Curâ pro Mortuis.

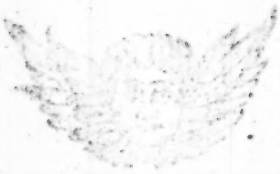
Tranſlated into Engliſh.

The ſecond Edition, Reviſed and Corrected.



PRINTED

Anno Dom. MDCLI.



Aurelius Augustin
TO
Paulin Bishop,
Concerning Care for the Dead.

CHAP. I.

I Have been a long time your debtour, venerable Brother & fellow Bishop *Paulinus*, for the Letters you sent me by the servants of our most religious sister *Flora*, wherein you propounded a question; *viz. Whither it profits any one after his decease, to have his body buried at the memory of*

The memory of the saints is the place where their body or relicks are kept.

some Saint. For this, it seems, the above mentioned widow had enquired of you, concerning her sonne deceased in those parts; to whom you had returned answer to her comfort, signifying withall, that the thing was accomplished, which with such maternall and pious affection she desired; namely, to have the corps of the faithfull youth *Cyneguus* departed, put in the Church of the most blessed Confessour *Felix*: by occasion whereof it came to passe, that you writ also at the same time to me by the same messengers, intimating the question above-said, and demanding my opinion therein, yet in such manner, as you do not altogether conceal your own. For you say, the desire of those faithfull

and

religious minds, which procure such things to be done for them, seem not to you to be altogether vain; and that the custome of the Catholick Church, *which is to pray for the dead*, cannot be to no purpose: so as, that even thence we ought to conjecture, that it is of some avail for a man after his death, if by his faithfull friends living such a place be provided for the interment of his body, as may procure him the assistance of *patronage of some Saint*. But you say withall, that although this be so, yet you see not sufficiently how the opinion can be reconciled to that of the Apostle, who saith, *We shall all stand at Christs Tribunall, that every one may receive according to what he hath done in his bo-*

Noreth's The custome of the Church to pray for the dead.

Patronage of Saints usefull for the dead.

dy, whither it be good or evil. For say you, without all doubt this sentence of the Apostle doth tell us, that That which shall profit us after death, must be done before, *viz.* in our life, therefore not then to be done, when every one is to receive for what he hath done already.

But the difficulty is resolved thus; namely, that it is procured by the manner of life which we lead here *in the body*, that such Things as these should do us good after we are departed: and so it holds true still, that *according to things done in the body men receive*, yea what they receive benefit by what

Saint Augustin. in his Enchiridion ad Laurentium chap. 110. asserts these threefold sorts of Christians, whereof the middle sort is onely capable of help after this life, which clearly concludes Purgatory.

done

done for them religiously after their decease. For it must be confest, there are some sorts of men, to whom the doing of such Things as these would be of no advantage at all, to wit, either those who have lived so ill, that they deserve not to be holpen by them, or those who have lived so well, they need not. It is therefore by the manner of life which every one leadeth *in this body*, that the things religiously done for them after the body, do either profit or not profit at all. For certainly, if no merit be acquired in this life, by which such Things may be rendred profitable to a man after his death; it were then, that is to say, after he is dead, in vain to seek it. So we see, neither the *office of the Church*, nor our own care

Note, The Church used then an office of the dead.

of our deceaſed friends is idle or vain; and yet that it is true, that *every one receiveth according to thoſe Things which he hath done in the body, whither it be good or evil, our Lord himſelf rendring unto every one according to his works.* For as we ſay, it is procured by the life a man leadeth *in the body*, that what is thus done for him, ſhould profit him after his body is dead. And to have ſaid onely thus much might I conceive, be a ſufficient anſwer to your demand: but by reaſon of ſome other Things, which ſeem to me not unworthy our conſideration, I ſhall crave your attention yet a little further.

Maccha-bees alledged for Scripture.

We reade in the Book of *Macchabees, That ſacrifice was offered for the dead.* And though

though it were not found at all in any place of the antient Scripture, yet the Authority of the *universall Church, which is clear for this custome*, is not lightly to be regarded; where in the prayers which the Priest maketh unto our Lord God, standing at his *Altar*, recommendation of the dead hath its due place.

Universall custome of praying for the dead. Masse for the dead.

CHAP. II.

WE must therefore somewhat more diligently enquire into the point propounded, *viz. Whither the place of buriall may be any advantage to a deceased soule*. And first, we shall not so much look upon the common opinion, as examine according to the sacred Scriptures of our re-

ligion, whither indeed it addeth any thing to the misery and affliction of mens souls after this life, *if their bodies be not buried at all.* Out of all doubt, that which *Virgil* some where saith is of little truth, that the souls of unburied people are forbidden the passage of the Infernall River, as if forsooth

Æneid. 6

They might not cross that silent stream
of horrid Phlegethon,
Till Superstition had compos'd
the Urns of every one.

For what Christian heart can be moved with such fictions? seeing our Lord Jesus, that Christians might dy securely under their hands, who for some time were to have power over their bodies, assures them that *not an hair of their head should perish*; and therefore exhorts

horts them not to fear those who after *they have killed the body, have no more to do.* Upon which subject in my first book of the City of God, I suppose I may have spoken sufficiently to stop their mouths, who charged the Christians with the calamities of those times, especially that which Rome suffered by those barbarous people, yea objected that Christ either could not, or would not help his own; to whom when as I replyed, that the souls of the faithfull people were at that time largely rewarded by Christ for their sufferings, they objected again, or rather reproached me with the dishonour of their unburied bodies; whereupon I was forced to inlarge my self somewhat upon that subject,

concern-

concerning the buriall of men, which I will here set down in "the words I then used. Neither indeed was it possible, "they should all be buried in "such a ruine of Carcases. Nor "will a pious man who believeth that saying of our "Saviour much fear this, nor "think that beasts, which by "chance devour their bodies, "can at all prejudice their Resurrection, being assured, "that *not an hair of their head* "*shall perish*. For he who is "Truth it self would never "have said, *Fear not them* "*which kill the body, but* "*cannot kill the soul*, if it "could be any prejudice to the "future life of the Saints, that "which their enemies do to "their bodies here. Unless "peradventure a man will

be

"be ſo abſurd, as to contend,
"that we ought not before our
"death to fear them which kill
"the body, *viz.* leaſt they
"ſhould kill it, but yet that
"we ought to fear, leaſt after
"death they ſhould not ſuffer
"that body to be buried, which
"they have already killed.
"For then certainly it were not
"true which Chriſt ſayes,
"*They which kill the body,*
"*have no more to do,* if ſo be
"they could do any thing
"more towards the dead car-
"caſe, that were to be regard-
"ed. But God forbid, that any
"thing ſhould be falſe which
"the Truth hath ſpoken. For
"we ſay, they which kill, do
"ſomething while they kill the
"body, becauſe in the body
"there is ſenſe and ſome feel-
"ing, while it is to be killed:

but

"but that afterwards *they*
"*have no more to do*, becauſe
"in a body already killed
"there is no ſenſe at all.
"Wherefore many bodies of
"good Chriſtians have hap-
"pened to want buriall, but
"none of them could be ever
"excluded from heaven and
"earth both, which he totally
"filleth with his preſence, who
"beſt knoweth, how and
"whence to reſtore again that
"which he once made. It is
"ſaid indeed in the Pſalmes,
Pſal. 78. "*They expoſed the Bodies of thy*
"*ſervants for meat to the fouls*
"*of the air, and the fleſh of thy*
"*Saints to the beaſts of the*
"*land, they powred out their*
"*bloud like water round about*
"*Hieruſalem, and there was*
"*none that would bury them.*
"But this was ſpoken rather to

aggravate

"aggravate the cruelty of those
"who did such things, then to
"intimate any unhappinesse in
"them which suffered: For
"although such things as these
"may seem hard, yea horri-
"ble in the eyes of men, yet
"*precious* doubtlesse *in the*
"*sight of the Lord is the death*
"*of his Saints*.

"And therfore all these par-
"ticulars, that is to say, pro-
"vision of a Funerall, the qua-
"lity of Sepulture, the pomp
"and magnificence of Exequies
"may seem rather to be, as it
"were, comforts of the liv-
"ing, then any helps for the
"dead. For certainly if a state-
"ly Buriall could of it self any
"thing advantage a wicked
"man, to be poorly buried, or
"not buried at all would be
"some prejudice to a good;

which

"which we know to be false,
"for doubtlesse that rich glut-
Luc. 16. "ton in the Gospell, *who was*
"*clothed in purple and fared so*
"*deliciously every day*, when
"he died, had a very sumptu-
"ous Funerall made him by
"his kindred and servants; but
"yet far more glorious in the
"sight of God was that given
"unto the poor begger by the
"hands of Angels, who carri-
"ed him out not unto any
"Tomb of Marble, but (to the
"place where he desired to be)
"*into the bosome of Abraham.*
"'Tis true, those against whom
"we have undertaken to de-
"fend the City of God, laugh
"at these things, nevertheless
"even their own Philosophers
"oftentimes have seem'd to
"make as little account of the
"rites of Sepulture; and whole

Armies

"Armies of men, when they
"come into the field with reſo-
"lution to dy for their tempo-
"rall countryes, of all things
"mind leaſt where their bo-
"dies fall, or what beaſts ſhall
"devour them; yea the Poets
"themſelves not without ap-
"plauſe have been heard to
"ſay, *Heaven covers him who*
"*hath no Cofin*: how much leſſe Lucan.
"ought they then to inſult over
"Chriſtians concerning their
"bodies lying unburied, to
"whom they cannot but know,
"reſtauration of their fleſh
"and of all the members of
"their body is promiſed, by
"him who is ſufficiently able
"to do it, yea and ſhall be in
"a moment perfectly made
"good unto them, whether
"from the earth, or from thoſe
"remoteſt receptacles of other

ele-

" elements, into which the ſub-
" ſtance of their bodies by ne-
" ver ſo many changes, and
" changes upon changes may
" be retired.

Chap. III.

" WHich yet we ſpeak
" not to the intent
" the bodies of men, eſpecially
" thoſe of the Faithfull and
" Juſt, ſhould be neglected
" after death, and throwa out
" of ſight as ſome other com-
" mon carcaſes, for as much as
" the Holy Ghoſt hath been
" pleaſed to uſe them in their
" times as his own organs or
" inſtruments *unto all good*
" *works*. For if but a ring, veſt-
" ment, or ſome other thing
" belonging to our Father be
" very dear unto us, and ſo
much

"much the more, by how
"much our naturall affection
"was greater and more lively
"towards him; in no sort cer-
"tainly may the bodies of men
"be despised, which we carry
"about us much more intrinse-
"cally and nearly united then
"any vestment whatsoever:
"for our bodies pertain not un-
"to matter of ornament or any
"extrinsecall help, but to the
"very substance of our nature.
"Whence it is also, that the
"Funeralls of just men in old
"time, were performed with
"a great deal of piety & care;
"their Exequies solemnly cele-
"brated, and the places of their
"buriall with much diligence
"provided, yea themselves in
"their life time, would fre-
"quently give command con-
"cerning the burying and re-
moving

Gen. 23. 47. 49. 50

"moving of their bodies after
"their death, as there was
Tob. 2. 12 "cause. And Tobias is com-
"mended by no lesse Testi-
"mony then of an Angel, to
"have merited with God, for
"that he was diligent to bury
"the dead. Yea our Lord
"himself, (although he were
"to rise again within three
"dayes after his Passion) yet
"cõmended the care the good
"woman had of his buriall,
"and commanded that the
"good work she had done in
"providing such precious oint-
"ments to imbalm his body,
"should be preached, to her
"praise all the world over:
"& there is honourable men-
"tion made in the Gospel of
"those who took down the
"body of our Lord from the
"Crosse, and gave it Buriall.

All

"All which Authorities yet
"are not to teach us, that there
"is any sense in dead bodies,
"but onely, seeing that such
"offices of piety are pleasing
"to God, they signifie unto us,
"that even the dead bodies do
"pertain unto the divine Pro-
"vidence, and this the rather
"to confirm our Faith in the
"Resurrection. And hence al-
"so we may learn not unpro-
"fitably, how great reward
"there may be for such Alms
"as we give unto living peo-
"ple, when even that which is
"bestowed upon the dead and
"liveleſſe members is not loſt
"with God. There are indeed
"some other particulars, which
"the Holy Patriarchs who
"speak them, would have to
"be understood concerning
"the buriall and translating of

their

"their bodies after death, as
"ſpoken by a propheticall ſpi-
"rit, but this is no place to treat
"of them, ſeeing that which
"we have deliver'd already
"may ſuffice. For if thoſe
"things which are neceſſary
"to the ſuſtenance of the liv-
"ing, and cannot be wanted
"but with great difficulty, as
"victualls, apparell &c. yet
"do never (when they are
"wanted) violate or over-
"throw the virtue of patience
"in good people, nor extir-
"pate piety quite out of the
"mind, but rather exerciſe and
"revive it; much leſſe doubtleſs
"can thoſe things, wch are uſu-
"ally expended in Funeralls &
"Exequies upon deceaſed per-
"ſons, (when they happen to
"be wanting) make thoſe per-
"ſons miſerable, who are al-

ready

"ready ſetled and at reſt in
"thoſe ſecret Tabernacles of
"the juſt. And therefore when
"it ſo fell out in the devaſtati-
"on of that great City and of
"the adjacent Towns, that the
"bodies of good chriſtians had
"not Buriall, we may not pre-
"ſently charge either the living
"with any crime thereabout,
"who could not help it, not
"yet the dead with any great
"misfortune, who were as lit-
"tle ſenſible of it. This is my
opinion concerning the matter
of Sepulture in generall, which
I have therefore tranſlated into
this book out of that other of
the City of God, in regard it
was ſomething more eaſie for
me to repeat it in this, then to
deliver it in a new manner.

CHAP.

Chap. IIII.

NOw if this be so, surely also the provision of place for the burial of bodies at the monuments of Saints must have something in it; it must be at least an argument of some good humane affection toward our friends, whose funeralls we celebrate: and if it be some kind of Religion to bury them at all, certainly to have care in what place we bury them cannot but be of like merit. But yet, when such comforts as these are procured by the living (by which indeed their pious affection toward their deceased friend is sufficiently declared to survive) yet I say, I perceive not, for my part, any advantage coming thereby unto

to the dead, unleſſe it be in this onely reſpect, namely, that when men remember where the bodies of their deceaſed friends are placed, they may in their prayers recommend them unto God more effectually by the interceſſion of thoſe Saints unto whoſe patronage they may ſeem by the place of their Buriall, to be received; which yet alſo they might, if they pleaſed, very wel do, ſuppoſing they were not interred in ſuch places. Neither are thoſe more eminent Sepulchres of the dead called *Memories* or *Monuments* for any other reaſon, then becauſe they do as it were, renew or preſerve the remembrance of ſuch perſons, as are by death withdrawn from the common converſation of men, and ſo hinder, that they periſh not altogether

Patronage of Saints profitable when deſired.

gether as much in the minds of their friends, as they seem lost to their eye. For the very name of memory imports this clearly, and a *Monument* is so called, because it *admoniſheth*, or, as it were, prompteth the mind to something, which is fit to be thought on. For which reason also, the same thing wch we call a *Memory* or *Monument*, the Greeks call μνημεῖον, from μνήμη, which in their language is as much as *remembrance* with us. Whensoever therefore the mind of a man remembers where the body of some dear friend is buryed, if the place which comes to mind be also venerable and renown'd for the name of some Martyr, instantly without more adoe the good affection of him that remembers this, in his prayers

Souls recommended unto the Martyrs.

re-

recommendeth the soul it loved *unto the same Martyr*: which affection yet, when it is exhibited by faithfull and dear friends unto people departed, they themselves before their departure merited, that it should be availeable to them: And therefore where necessity suffers not either that bodyes be buryed at all, or not in such places as these, yet *prayer for the souls departed is never pretermitted*, which the Church of God, as it were, ingageth her self to performe, at least under a generall Commemoration, without particular mention of names, in behalf of all those who are departed in the Christian Catholick Communion, to the intent that by the care of one pious & Common Mother unto all, supply

Prayer for the souls departed.

may bee made of ſuch good offices, wherein poſſibly our friends, kindred, Children or parents may be defective towards us. So that indeed, in caſe theſe ſupplications wee ſpeak of (which are uſually done *in right faith and piety for the dead*) ſhould bee wanting, or not made at all, I for my part ſuppoſe, it would not much profit a mans ſoul, to have his body buryed in a holy place.

Chap. V.

WHerefore (to return to our purpoſe) when as this faithfull Mother deſired to have the body of her faithfull Child put in the Church of a Martyr, this deſire of hers was a kind of prayer

prayer, for as much as shee beleeved *his soul might receive help by the merits of the Martyr.* And this was that which profited if any thing did profit at all. So when the Mother afterwards remembers the same sepulchre, and in her prayers more and more instantly recommends her Sonne, it is not the place of the dead body, but the Mothers lively affection, (perhaps excited and quickened by the memory of the place) which *succours the soul of the deceased.* For doubtless it doth not unprofitably concern the religious mind of one that prayeth to consider at once, both who is recommended, and to whom he is recommended. Even as we see men that pray, do commonly so dispose the members

Souls receiving help by the merits of the Martyrs.

S. Aug. assures us that prayer for the dead is very profitable; though he was not certain whither the buriall in any particular place be so available, yet he much encline-rh so that also, and proveth it very strongly.

of their body, as usually is most proper and effectuall for suppliants to do, as when they bend their knees, when they spread their hands, when they prostrate their bodies on the ground, or do any other visible action of that nature; although, I say, their invisible will and hearts intention be known well enough unto God, who needs none of these signs to make him see what is in the heart of man, yet certainly the man who prayeth, doth move himself to pray, to lament, to grieve by such motions and postures as those, much more humbly, much more fervently and devoutly then otherwise he would. Yea, and how it comes to pass I know not, seeing these motions of the body are not made but by some precedent

motion

motion of the mind, yet certain it is, that by these externall actions visibly done, that other invisible motion which caused them, is reciprocally increased, and by this means that affection of mind which preceded those Actions as the cause of them, is it self also increased, because they are done: and yet notwithstanding, when it happens that a man is held in such sort, or perhaps tyed by constraint, that he cannot so dispose his corporall members as willingly he would, his interiour man ceaseth not therefore to pray, nor yet to prostrate himself before Almighty God in the more secret Cabinet of a contrite heart.

In like manner truly it much imports, where a man can place the dead body of him, for

Observe this, that it much imports even where the body is interred.

whose soul he intends to supplicate almighty God; because both his precedent affection did chuse an holy place, and also having put the body there, the remembrance of the same place revives and increases that affection which preceded it. But nevertheless a religious friend being determined to give buriall to him whom he loveth, although he cannot perhaps obtain to bury him where he would, yet let him not by any means forbear necessary prayers in his recommendation: for whatsoever becometh of the dead body, *the Rest of his soul must be procured*: which soul of his, when it left the body, carried its sense along with it, by which is distinguished in what condition every one is after death, whither good or evil.

Rest of the souls to bee procured even after death.

cuil. Nor doth the spirit of man after departure expect, that its life should be any way relieved now by that flesh, to which it self, when time was, afforded life; which life at the hour of death it carried away with it self, and shall restore again, when it returnes. For this is certain, the flesh procures not the merit of Resurrection to the spirit but the spirit to the flesh, whither it revives unto pain or glory.

Chap. VI.

WE read in the Chronicles of the Church, which *Eusebius* wrote in Greek, and after him *Ruffinus* translated into Latine, that the bodies of some Martyrs in *France* were thrown unto dogs,

and that what the dogs left of them together with their very bones was afterwards consumed with fire, and the ashes cast into the river *Rhosne*; so that not the least part of them could remain for memory. Which we cannot imagine was permitted by the Divine Providence for any other reason then to teach Christians, that by them, who for the honour and Confession of Christ do despise their own lives, the want of buriall after death is least of all to be regarded. For out of all doubt this thing, which was executed with so great cruelty upon the Martyrs bodies, would never have been suffered by God, if the victorious Souls themselves could thereby have been hindered of their Crowns and rest. Hence therefore it is

clearly

clearly manifeſt, that our Lord ſaying *Fear not thoſe who kill the body, and have no more to do*, meant not, that men ſhould act nothing upon the bodies of his ſervants deceaſed, as well as living, but that whatſoever they ſhould be ſuffered to do, nothing ſhould be done, that might diſturb their happineſſe, nothing that ſhould affect them with any ſenſe of grief, nothing that ſhould hinder the perfect reſurrection and reſtauration of their bodies in due time.

CHAP.

Chap. VII.

ALL which notwithstanding, by reason of that naturall and inbred affection which is in men, in respect whereof it is said that *no man ever hated his own flesh*, if they perceive that any thing be likely after their death to be wanting unto their bodies, which the solemnity of funerall would require at least according to the custome of the countrey and place where they live, we see, they cannot forbear to be sad like men, and sollicitous for that provision touching their bodies before death, of which, when they are once dead, they shall not be sensible at all. Yea so far doth this extend, that in the book of *Kings*

we read, how God Almighty himself by one Prophet threatneth another, who had transgressed his command, that his body should not be buried in the Sepulchre of his Fathers. The words of Scripture are these. *Thus saith our Lord, Foraſmuch as thou haſt diſobeyed the mouth of our Lord, and haſt not kept the Commandment which our Lord thy God commanded thee, but cameſt back, and haſt eaten bread, and drank water, in the place in which our Lord commanded thee not to eat bread, nor drink water, thy carcaſe ſhall not be brought into the ſepulchre of thy Fathers.* Which puniſhment, if we conſider it according to the Goſpel, where (as hath been often ſaid) we are taught 3 Reg. 13. 21.

not

not to fear, after our departure, any thing that may be done to our dead members, it will ſcarce ſeem to be any puniſhment at all: but if we reflect upon that humane affection, which all men naturally bear to their own fleſh, a man can hardly chooſe but be contriſtated, even while he liveth, for that, which when he is dead, he ſhall not feel. In this reſpect therefore it was a puniſhment unto the Prophet, that he could not forbear to grieve at preſent, for that which ſhould afterward befall his body, though when it ſhould indeed befall, he were ſure enough to have no ſenſe of it. For the will of our Lord doubtleſſe was to chaſtiſe his ſervant thus far onely, who had tranſgreſſed his command, not ſo much by any par-

particular pravity of his own will, as through the fallacy of another who deceived him, and made him think he had obeyed the command of God, when he did not. And it were very hard to think otherwise, as that his body being killed by the tearings of that beast, his soul should also be plucked away at the same time to the torments of hell. No, we see the Lyon which killed him became instantly his Guardian, and defended his body from the ravening of other beasts, yea the very Asse on which he rode, remained untouched, seeming to assist as it were, with an undaunted presence, at the Funeralls of his Master; which certainly was not without miracle, and an evident sign that the man of God in that

that cafe was corrected onely unto a temporall death, and not at all punifhed afterward: not much unlike to that paſſage of the Apoſtle, where having commemorated the infirmities, yea deaths of many of the people, for ſome particular offenſes among them, he concludes at laſt thus, *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged by our Lord, but when we are judged, we are chaſtized by our Lord, leſt we ſhould be condemned with the world.* And truly he who had deceived this Prophet, buryed him afterward in his own monument with ſufficient honour, yea and took order beſide, that himſelf might be afterwards buryed as near as might be unto his corps, hoping, (as we may probably ſuppoſe) that

1 Cor. 11.31.

by

by this means his own bones might be ſpared, when the time ſhould come, according to the propheſie of this very man of God, that the good King *Joſias* ſhould cauſe the bones of many dead people to be diſinterred, and thoſe idolatrous altars which had been built unto ſtrange Gods, in and about Hieruſalem, to be defiled therewith. For ſo indeed it came to paſſe: The Monument wherein this Prophet was buryed, who foretold thoſe things three hundred years before, and the Sepulchre of him who deceived him, were ſpared. And ſo we ſee, out of that naturall affection by which every man loves his own fleſh, this Prophet was carefull to provide for the temporall ſecurity of his body even after death, 4 Reg. 23. 18.

who.

who yet by a lye (so much as in him lay) cared not to hazzard his soul for ever. In this respect therefore, that every one naturally loveth his own flesh, it was some kind of punishment for the one to know, that he should not come to be buried in the Sepulchre of his fathers; and in the other (if that had been all) a providence not unworthy of commendation, *viz.* to lay his bones in a Sepulchre, which he was sure none would violate.

CHAP.

Chap. VIII.

The Martyrs indeed, while they fought for the truth, vanquished this affection; and it was no marvell they should: for they who could not be overcome with any torments they suffered alive, it had been very strange, should they have shrunk at any thing which was to follow after death, whereof they should have no sense. Doubtlesse God Almighty, who suffered not the Lyon so much as to touch the Prophet after he was dead, but as it were commanded him to gard that body which he had slain, could as easily, if he had so pleased, have kept off those doggs from the bodies of his servants, he could have terrified

fied by a hundred wayes the cruell minds of those people, that they should not have dared either to burn their bodies, or to throw about their ashes. But this was a tryall of those Saints not fit to be wanting to the rest of their sufferings, that the fortitude of their Confession, which was already well seen in not yielding to any tortures to save their life, might yet be consummated as it were, and perfected in this, that for Christs sake they regarded as little the honour of Sepulture, remaining through their Faith in the Resurrection, as secure of their bodies, as they were of their souls. And for this reason also it was fit that such things should be permitted to be done, that the Martyrs themselves by such glorious com-

combats ſhould become fervent witneſſes of that Truth, which from our Saviour they had learned, namely, That they which thus cruelly tyranized over their bodies, after death *had no more to do*; ſeeing that whatſoever they ſhould attempt upon the bodies once dead would be nothing: nothing I ſay, either in reſpect of the ſoul, which onely hath ſenſe, and was already departed; or in reſpect of God the Creatour, whoſe providence is ſuch, as nothing can be loſt which he hath made. And yet notwithſtanding, while theſe Martyrs themſelves with infinite courage ſuffered ſuch things, not caring (for the love of Chriſt) what became of their bodies dead or alive; their fellow-brethren, the

reſt

rest of the Christians had great sorrow at the same time, were much afflicted, that by reason hereof and of the extream vigilance of their persecutours, they could not perform the honours of their funeralls, no not so much as to procure privately the least Relick of them, as the same history sheweth. So as, when no evil at all touched them who were killed, either that their bodies were torn in pieces, or their bones burnt, or their ashes cast abroad, yet in the living we see, there was much sorrow and affliction, because they were not able to do that for their friends, which this naturall affection seemed to require: that is, there was in them a great deal of sense for that, of which the dead had no sense, and much compassion,

Christians in oldtimes used diligence to get any small relicks of Saints.

as

as I may so say, where indeed was no Passion at all.

Chap. IX.

According unto which kind of *miserable compassion*, as it may be called, we reade, those men were highly commended by King *David*, who had buried, that is, shewed such pity unto the dry bones of *Saul* and *Jonathan*. But can any pity be shewen to them who have no sense of misery? Or shall we say, that this agreeth with the opinion of *Virgil*, that deceased people cannot passe that river of Hell, cannot come at the Elysian fields, nor be at rest, till their bodies be buried? God forbid that Christianity should admit such a Paradox. If that were

2 Reg 2. 5.

were true, millions of Martyrs were in a miserable case, whose bodies were never buried, yea and the Truth it self had much deceived them, saying, *Fear not them who kill the body, and afterward have no more to do*, if they could do them so great mischief yet after death, as to hinder their passe unto their desired rest. But seeing this is so undoubtedly false, and that for certain the want of buryall hurteth faithfull souls no more, then it doth advantage an infidell to be buried sumptuously, what may the reason then be, that the good and religious King *David* should so highly commend them, who buried *Saul* and his son? Certainly it was nothing but this, *viz.* the good affection, with which their hearts were touched, who

buried

buried them, and that it seemed to be affliction to them, that such calamity should befall the bodies of others, as out of that naturall love which all men bear to themselves, they would never wish to their own; and that they were content, yea studious, while they lived, and knew what they did, to exhibite those good offices to others, though unsensible of them, which they would be glad should be performed to themselves afterward, when they also should be past all sense.

C CHAP.

CHAP. X.

BUt there are certain visions recounted, which may seem to move no inconsiderable doubt in this point. For they say, that sundry deceased persons have been known to appear unto the living, not onely in their sleep, but otherwise, and to tell their friends, who were otherwise ignorant of it, in what places their bodies lay unburied, seeming to desire, that those duties which were wanting might be performed towards them. Now if we should say that these things were false, we might be thought to use more boldnesse then became us, both in regard of the writings of some faithfull Christians who report it, as

alſo in regard of the teſtimony and ſenſible experience of thoſe to whom ſuch viſions have happened. We ſhall anſwer therefore, that it follows not, that the dead have any ſenſe at all of what is done to their bodies, becauſe they ſeem to ſpeak, to declare or deſire ſuch and ſuch things of men in their ſleep. For even the living many times appear unto the living while they ſleep, when themſelves know not that they do appear, and afterward hear men relate with great confidence the things which they dreamed, affirming that ſuch and ſuch things they ſaw them, that is to ſay, their friends that ſhould appear to them, do or ſpeak in their ſleep. If therefore, for inſtance ſake, it be poſſible for a man to ſee me in

his ſleep, telling him, that ſome ſuch thing is done, or ſhall be done, my ſelf in the mean time not knowing nor perceiving any ſuch thing, yea ſo little regarding what he dreams, that I neither know nor care, whither ſuch a perſon ſleeps when I wake, or waketh when I ſleep, or whither it happens not, that we ſleep or wake both of us at that ſame time, when he ſuppoſeth he ſees me in his ſleep: if I ſay, this be poſſible, what wonder is it if the dead, without any reall ſenſe or knowledge of ſuch things themſelves, ſhould alſo be ſeen of the living, yea and tell them ſomething, which when they wake they may find to be true. I rather think indeed that all this is done by the miniſtery of ſome Angels, whither by

divine

divine permiſſion onely or command, that they ſignifie ſuch things unto men by way of viſion, touching the burying of thoſe bodies, whoſe ſpirits at that time know not any thing what becomes of their bodies. For this doubtleſſe is not altogether unprofitably done, whether we regard the comfort of the living, to whom thoſe dead people belong, whoſe Ghoſts do ſeem thus to appear, or the office of buriall it ſelf, which is matter of ſo commendable charity even to mankind in generall, that although the dead receive no particular comfort thereby, yet it cannot be wholly neglected without offence of Religion; ſometimes indeed men are much miſled by fallacious and imaginary viſions, but they are

moſt commonly ſuch, as deſerve juſtly to be ſo deluded: as for example, when any one ſees in his dreams ſuch things as Æneas is reported to have met with in his imaginary travels through hell, and that the Ghoſt of ſome unburied perſon ſhould appear to him, begging the ſame things of him, which Palinurus is fabled to have done of Æneas, that is to ſay, the interring of his corps, and that when he awakes he ſhould indeed find the body in ſuch a place as was told him in his dream; if becauſe he finds thus much of his dream to be true, he ſhould fall to think, that therefore mens bodies are buried, that the ſouls thereby may paſſe unto thoſe places of reſt, to which otherwiſe by the law of Hell they could

could not passe, who doubts but that this man should grosly deceive himself, and deviate from the Truth?

Chap. XI.

YEt such is the generall infirmity of men, that when at any time they happen to have a vision in their sleep of any dead person, presently they imagine the very soul of such a man appears to them; when as at the same time, if they happen to dream of one, or see one that is alive, they never take it either for body or soul, but as it is indeed, for a meer similitude of such a man appearing to them; as if perchance it were not altogether as possible, for the similitudes of souls, as wel as of bodies, (in the absence

of the souls themselves, & without their knowledge thereof, to be presented to men in their dreams.

This, which I am about to tell, when I was at *Millain*, I heard reported for certain. A certain debt was demanded of one by virtue of a writing under his deceased fathers hand, which debt had been discharged by the Father living, his sonne not knowing thereof, nor yet how to make it appear that it was discharged: he was therefore much troubled and perplexed at it, wondring why his Father at his death, and at the making of his Testament should not acquaint him with that debt. Being thus in perplexity, his Father in his sleep appears to him, and tels him where he should find the discharge

charge of that debt recorded; which the ſonne accordingly ſeeking found and produced, and thereby not onely voided the Action of debt, which was unjuſtly brought againſt him, but alſo recovered the writing it ſelf, which his Father when he paid the mony, did not remember to take out: In this caſe therefore it cannot but ſeem, that the ſoul of the Father had a care of his ſonne, by coming to him and telling him matter of importance, which himſelf knew not of, and thereby delivering him from a great deal of trouble. But at the ſame time that I heard this, namely whiſe I ſtayed at *Millain*, there happened at *Carthage* ſomething which makes me doubt: it was this. *Eulogius* the Rhetorician there, one who

had been formerly my ſcholar in that Art, (as himſelf told me the ſtory afterwards, when I was come again into *Africk*) was reading to his Scholars *Tullies* books of Rhetorick, and peruſing the leſſon or place which he was to expound publickly the next day in the Schools, he met with one obſcure paſſage in it, which he could not poſſibly underſtand, and was therefore very much perplexed about it, yea could take no reſt all that night, till, as he ſaid, I my ſelf appeared to him and told him the meaning of it: yet certainly not I my ſelf, but ſome image or ſimilitude of me; for I knew nothing of the buſineſſe, I was far from him on the other ſide of the ſea, buſied about other affairs, had no thoughts, no care,

not

not so much as dream't, what my Scholar might be doing. Now how these things come to passe, I confesse I know not, yet which way soever they do, why may we not think, that the appearances of the dead and living both, are, as it were, much one and the same, effected in one and the same manner, and by one and the same means, that is, neither the living nor the dead knowing at all, when themselves or their similitudes do so appear.

CHAP.

Chap. XII.

NOt unlike unto dreams are the visions which some have both living and waking, namely those who are troubled in their mind, frantick or distempered people; for such many times we observe talking to themselves as unto companions, sometimes with such as are absent, as if they were present, and with the dead as if they were alive, and this by reason of the *Idea's* or forms of such persons or things as by accident get into their fancy. But even as the living themselves, in such cases, know not that they seem to appear and speak unto such persons, who through distemper of mind do conceive themselves

to

to see and hear them; (for in reality sure they are neither present with them, nor talking to them, but onely the poor men have such phantasms in their head which trouble them,) so also is it, when they imagine themselves to talk or converse with any that be dead; for the dead come not at them, nor do they know whither such people think of them yea or no.

And like unto this is also an other case of some people, who seem, as it were, to be abstracted from themselves, and more deprived of their bodily senses, then they should be, if they onely slept, yet in the mean time entertained with strange visions. For unto such also appear the similitudes of living and dead men: and when

when they come again to their senses, if they report that they saw any of the dead, men are apt to believe that in their extasies they were really with those dead, not considering how at the same time, upon their report, they also saw others which were alive, and far enough distant from them, and no way thinking of them; as I shall shew you by one notable example. A certain ordinary person of *Tully's* incorporation, which is nigh unto *Hippo*, one *Curina* by name, a poor Officer in that place, and scarce got into the rank of a *Duumvir*, and an absolute ruftick beside, fell sick, had his senses quite taken from him, and lay for some dayes in a manner dead, yet some little breath remaining;

ing in him, which could hardly be perceived by laying ones finger to his nosthrills, yet it served for some slender token of life, so as he was not buried as one absolutely dead; he stirred not one member of his body, received no kind of sustenance all that while, perceived no body, either by sight or any other sense, what pain soever they laboured to put him to; yet in his vision he saw many things, which at length after many dayes awaking he reported. And first of all upon the very opening of his eyes, *Let some body*, quoth he, *go to Curina the Smiths house and see what's to do there*; whither when the messenger came, that *Curina*, *viz.* the Smith, was found to be dead, in that very moment when this

this other returned to his senses, seeming, as it were, to be restored from death to life. Then he told those who stood about him, that *Curina* the Smith was commanded to appear at the very time, that himself was discharged, and that when he was dismissed, in the place from whence he came, he heard it said, that not *Curina* the Officer, but *Curina* the Smith was the man commanded to be brought unto those places of the dead. In this extasie therefore of his, as in a vision, he may seem to have conversed with the dead, yea to have seen them *treated*, as doubtlesse they are, according *to their severall merits*. And truly perhaps I should have thought my self, he had conversed with the very souls

of

of the dead, if he had not also seen in that vision sundry which are yet alive, namely, some Churchmen of his own Countrey, by the Priest whereof he was told, that at *Hippo* he should be baptized by me, which accordingly, he said, was done. Wherefore in that vision, it is clear, he saw both a Priest, certain of the Clergy, my self; none of us all as yet dead, as well as he saw those that were dead. Why then might he not see us all both dead and living, after one manner, that is, not present but absent, not knowing, but ignorant of what he saw, in a word, not in our persons, but in our similitudes, even as he did the places also? For he saw the Field where the Priest was, he saw

not

not only the Clarks, but the whole City of *Hippo* it self, where he was Baptized; in which places yet certainly he was not, for he knew nothing of what was done at *Hippo* all that time, which he would have done doubtlesse, if indeed he had been there. All this therefore was but by the way of vision, wherein things passe not alwayes in themselves or in verity of their substance, but are represented in Image or Similitude onely. Lastly, after many other things which he saw, he told how he was taken up into Paradise, and that it was said to him, when he was dismissed and ready to return to his friends, Go, Be Baptized, if ever you will live in this place of the Blessed; and when they told him fur-

further, that he must be Baptized by me, he answered, it was done already, but hee who communed with him replyed, *Go*, saith he, *and be Baptized indeed, for all this thou hast seen but in vision.* After this, the man recovered and came to *Hippo*. Easter approching he delivered in his name among the rest of the *Competents*, unknown to me, and not much caring, as it seems, to tell his Vision, either to my self or any about me. But Baptized he was, and when the Holy-dayes were over, he went home again to his own, and a year or two it was, before I understood any of these particulars, which I first learned from a friend of mine and his, sitting at table together and discoursing

sing of such matters. Thereupon I became my self inquisitive concerning the businesse, and caused him to make relation of the whole matter to my self in presence of many honest men, his fellow Citizens, who themselves testified the strange sickneſſe which he had, and that for the space of many dayes he lay as one dead; and what happened to that other *Curina* the Smith; and when he repeated all things, as I have related, his neighbours that stood by, remembred and testified that they had heard the same things from him before. Wherefore, as he saw his own Baptizing, and me, and the City of *Hippo*, the Church and the Font, not in the

things

things themſelves, or their very ſubſtance, but by certain ſimilitudes, ſo alſo did he ſee many other perſons alive, which neither knew nor had thought of him.

CHAP.

Chap. XIII.

WHy then might he not see those deceased persons (which he saw) not in their own persons or substances, but in representation onely, they themselves neither seeing nor conversing with him? Why shall we not say, that such things as these may be the operations of some Angels by order of the divine providence, who is pleased to use both the good and bad (yet both well) according to the unsearchable depth of his Judgments, whither mens minds be thereby instructed or deceived, whither they be comforted or troubled, according as every one is capable of punishment or favour from him

Angels appear to the living.

him whose *Mercy and Judgement both* his Church worthily celebrateth? But let every man judge of this as he thinks best. Certainly, if the souls of the dead could be so present in the affaires of the living, and converse with us, as they seem to do sometimes in our sleep; not to speak of others, my own deare Mother would not forbear me one night, who while she lived, followed me both by Sea and Land to enjoy my company: for God forbid, that by being Blessed her self, she should be now less tender-hearted towards me, that she should not, when any thing afflicts my heart, comfort her son as she used to do, whom, when time was, she loved with most singular affection, and could never endure

to

to see him grieved. But surely that is most true, which the Psalmist saith, namely *That my Father and Mother have forsaken me, yet our Lord hath taken me up.* If then (as the Scripture saith) our Fathers have forsaken us, how are they present with our affayres? how know they our cares? And if our Fathers themselves are not present, do not know our affairs, what are those other dead, which should know them? Isaias the Prophet saith, *Thou art our Father, because Abraham is ignorant of us and Israel knows us not.* If such great Patriarch's were ignorant of what was done touching the people of their own posterity, yea to whom for their faith in God that people and posterity were espe-

Psal. 26. 10.

Isa. 63. 16.

cially

cially promiſed, who can think that the dead generally do mixe themſelves or meddle one way or other in the affaires of the living? in what ſenſe can we ſay, it was happy for them who dyed before ſuch or ſuch evils happened, if even after death they were to be ſenſible of the calamityes of the times? or ſhall we peradventure ſay, that the errour is on our part, who will needs ſuppoſe them to be at reſt, whom yet the reſtleſs or calamitous lifes of others here do indeed continually diſquiet? But if ſo, what then would be the meaning, what ſpeciall favour in that promiſe which God Almighty made unto the good King Joſias, namely that hee ſhould dy before, that he ſhould not

live to see the evills which were threatned unto that place and people? The words of God are these. *Thus saith our Lord the God of Israel, my words which thou hast heard, and didst tremble before my face when thou heardest what I speak against this place and against the Inhabitants thereof, that it should be forsaken, and become a Curse, and hast rent thy cloaths and wept before me; I also have heard, saith our Lord, it shall not be: Behold I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt be placed in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evils which I will bring upon this place and the Inhabitants thereof.* This good King was terrifyed with the threatnings of God Almighty,

mighty, had wept and tore his garments, and is therefore as to his own person, secured against all those calamityes which were to come, by the promise of a timely death before they came, and that he should so rest in peace, that none of all those evills should touch him. Therefore certain it is, that the Spirits of men departed are there, where they neither know nor feel the accidents of this life. How then do they visit their own sepulchres? how can they know whither their bodyes be buryed or unburyed? how can we make them partake of the miseryes of the living? Seeing if they be bad, they have enough to suffer of their own: if otherwise, they rest in peace,

(as the good King Josias was to doe) having no sense of evill at all, either in the way of passion or compassion, but as absolutely free and discharged of whatsoever concernes this world.

CHAP.

Chap. XIV.

But perhaps some will say, if the dead have no care for the living, why did that rich Glutton in the Gospell, being himself in hell, pray Father Abraham to send Lazarus unto his five Brethren yet living in the world, and to deale with them, so as they might not come to that place of torment? But must we needs think that because *Dives* sayd thus, that therefore he did know at that time what his Brethren did, or how their state was? no verily, but we may think his care of the living (though he knew not particularly what Luc. 16.

they did) was such, as our care for the dead is, who know not certainly eyther what they do, or where they are and yet we have some kinde of care of them; for if we had not, certainly *we should never pray for them*. Neyther did Abraham send Lazarus unto them, but replyed, *they have Moyses and the Prophets*, whom they ought to follow, to the end they came not into those places of torment. And if you object, how could Abraham himself know that they had Moyses & the Prophets, if the dead know nothing of the affayres of the world after death (for Moyses and the Prophets were all after Abraham:) & how could he know that by observing the precepts of Moyses and the Pro-

Prophets men might eſcape hell, yea how could he know that this Dives had lived all his life long in ryot and pleaſures, and poore Lazarus in paynes? for ſo he tells him plainly, *Son remember that thou didſt receive good things in thy life, and Lazarus likewiſe evill:* if I ſay you conclude, that therefore Abraham, though dead, muſt needs know many things done among the living; I ſhall anſwere he did certainly know them, yet not then when they were a doing, or perhaps but newly done in the world, but afterwards, as he might by ſundry wayes, and particularly the ſtate of Dives and Lazarus he knew, not when Dives and Lazarus lived in the world, but afterwards

when they were both dead, hee might learn it of Lazarus; least otherwise that which the Prophet saith might seem not to hold true, viz. that *Abraham knoweth us not.*

Chap. XV.

He declares how many wayes the dead may come to know what is done in this world, & what things they know.

THerefore indeed it must be confessed that the dead know not what is done here; but this to be understood only while it is, as it were, a doing here, or but newly done; for afterwards, as I sayd, they may understand it, namely by those who dying depart from hence unto them; but yet not all things whatsoever, but those only which they are permitted

mitted to disclose, yea which they are permitted to remember, and may be necessary for others to know. The dead also may understand some thing from those Angels, whose office is to attend the affaires of this world, according as he sees good and expedient for them to know, to whom all things are subject. For unless there were some Angells, which conversed both with the dead and the living, our Lord Jesus would not have sayd, *it came to pass that the beggar dyed and was carryed of the Angels into Abrahams bosome.* Therefore they could be now here, now there, seeing as God would have it, they were used to carry him from hence unto the place of

his rest. The souls of the dead also may know some things by divine Revelation, either of such things as be necessary for them to know, or at least not necessary to be unknown, and this not only of things past or present, but of those also which are to come, even as in times past not all men in generall were made acquainted with the Secrets of God, but only Prophets and such other holy men while they lived, and they not every one of them knowing all things, but every one some, according as the Divine Providence was pleased to reveale. And that some of the dead also may be sent unto the living, the Scripture it self doth testifie, (as contrarily S. Paul from among the

Living

Living was rapt up into Paradise) for so we read, the Prophet Samuel after he was dead, appeared unto King Saul yet living, and foretold him things to come. 'Tis true, there are some that say, it was not Samuel himself that appeared, who could not, they think, have been so fetcht up with magicall charmes, but rather some evill Spirit ready and apt for such business borrowed his shape. But the book we call Ecclesiasticus, written as 'tis commonly said by Jesus the Son of Sirach, but for resemblance of stile and eloquence not unlike to be Solomons own work, in the praises of holy men sayes of Samuel, that *being dead he Prophecyed*: But if again you extenuate the autho-

authority of this book with the Jewes (becauſe they ſay it is not in their Canon) yet at leaſt concerning Moyſes no doubt can be made, but that in Deuteronomy he is related to be both dead and buryed, and yet in the Goſpell to have appeared unto the living, together with Elias, who as yet is not dead.

Deut. 34. 5.

CHAP.

Chap. XVI.

HEnce also we answer another question, *viz.* what may be said of the Martyrs, *who by the favours which are granted unto such as pray unto them* do declare themselves both to understand and to have care of our affairs, if the dead know not at all what the living do? for 'tis certain, and we know it by report of witnesses beyond exception, that when the City of *Nola* was besiedged by the *Barbarians*, the Blessed Confessour *Felix*, not onely by the effects of his particular favours, but even personally and in plain view did appear unto many good people inhabiting that City, whom he had for-

7 favours obteined by prayer to Saints.

Saints appear miraculously sometimes when invocated.

formerly dearly loved. But it must be said, that such things as those happen miraculously, and are farre different from the ullrall course, which God hath appointed unto the nature of all sorts of things. For because our Lord turned once water into wine, we must not therfore forget what the nature of water is, and what its proper virtue in the order of elements is, nor because *Lazarus* rose again from death, that therefore every man that dyeth may rise again when he will, or that a dead man is raised by no greater power, then another is awakened out of sleep. For to speak according to the limits and condition of mans nature in it self is one thing, and to speak according as God is

pleas-

pleased to demonstrate his divine power in it is another: and the things which come to passe naturally and as it were by constant course are of one sort, and those which are done miraculously by God are of another; yet is God alwayes assistant unto nature, without whom it could not be, and in miracles themselves nature is not absolutely excluded, because at least *in her* though not *by her* they are wrought. We must not therefore imagine, that the dead do ordinarily and of course mix themselves in the affairs of the living, because the Martyrs do sometimes shew themselves present, for the curing or help of some particular persons: But rather we are to know, it is by divine power of

How miracles are wrought by praying to Saints.

privi-

priviledge & dispensation that the Martyrs themselves are present with us at any time, because the dead generally & by any vertue of their own nature cannot be so. Although I confesse to determine in what particular manner the Martyrs do help them, *who for certain are helped by the Martyrs*, is a mater farre above my capacity: that is to say, whither the Martyrs be present in their own persons at the same time in so divers and farre distant places as their *Memories* are, or that they otherwise happen to shew themselves: or whither that God Almighty, the Martyrs abiding always in that place which is *appointed for their merits*, farre remote from the conversation of men

Here he inquires the maner how miracles are obteined by praying to Saints.

men, yet praying generally for the neceſſities of thoſe *who pray unto them*, in the ſame manner as *we pray for the dead* (to whom we are never preſent, nor know where they be, or what they do) or I ſay, whither that God Almighty himſelf, who is every where preſent, though not as joyned to us, nor as divided from us, hearing the prayers which the Martyrs make, doth by the miniſtery of Angels, which he ſends abroad into all places, exhibite ſuch comforts unto people againſt the miſeries of this life, as he ſeeth to be moſt expedient, who by his wonderfull power and goodneſſe giveth *teſtimony unto the merits of his Martyrs* both where, and when, and how he pleaſeth, but

Merits of the Martyrs acknowledged by S. Auſtin.

The Memory and mediation of Saints expedient for confirmation of faith.

but chiefly *at their memories*, as knowing this in his divine wisdome, to be most expedient for the Confirmation and Exaltation of the Faith of Christ, for which the Martyrs suffered. This I say is a thing much higher then I can reach unto, more abstruse and difficult then I can search out; and therfore which of the two it be, or whither perhaps both of the may not be true, *viz.* that sometimes by the verypresence of the Martyrs themselves, and sometimes again by Angels personating the Martyrs these things may be done, I dare not determine: I desire rather to learn such things of those who know them; For some there are surely who do know them, as there be some

others

others also perhaps, who think they do, but do not. For doubtlesse such things as these are the *Free Guifts* of God, who liberally bestoweth them as he pleaseth, some to one, some to another, according to that of the Apostle saying *The manifestation of the spirit is given to every one for their profit. To one saith he, is given by the spirit the word of wisdome: and to another the word of knowledge according to the same spirit. To another faith in the same spirit: to another the grace of doing cures in one spirit: to an other working of miracles; to an other kinds of tongues; to an other propheſie; to an other discerning of spirits; to an other interpretation of tongues. And all these*

1 Cor. 12 7, &c.

these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to every one according as he will. Of all which spirituall Gifts reconed up by the Apostle, he that hath the *discerning of spirits*, he onely is the man who knoweth the things we speak of, as they ought to be known.

CHAP

Chap. XVII.

And such most probably was that Holy Person *John* the Monk, whom the good Emperour *Theodosius* the Elder was pleased to consult concerning the event of the civill war: for this man had also the gift of Prophesie; as I doubt not concerning *those gifts* but as every one might have any one in particular and alone, so, as it pleased God, some one had many; as this *John* for example, of whom it is recounted, that a certain woman very devout and religious, being as it were passionately desirous to see him, and labouring by her husband to procure it some way or other with

How S. Aug. reverenced monks.

with the Holy man, it not being his manner to admit the converſation of women upon any terms, he refuſed, but yet *Go*, ſaith he, *tell your wife ſhe ſhall ſee me at night, but it ſhall be in her ſleep*; and ſo ſhe did. The good man appeared to her, and inſtructed her in all the duties of a faithfull wife, as ſhe her ſelf, as ſoon as ſhe did awake, told her husband, deſcribing the man of God to him, in ſuch form and ſhape as he knew him to have. This truly I have heard reported by one, who had it from the parties themſelves, a grave and honourable perſonage, and worthy, I think, of all credit. But as to the matter, if I my ſelf had ever ſeen that Saintly Monk, (as

The manner how apparitions are made

report

report of him, that he was a man of most sweet conversation, and wont most patiently to hear what men propounded to him, and most wisely to give answer) I would have enquired of him something pertaining to this question, that is, Whither himself, or (which is all one) his spirit in the figure of his body did indeed come unto that woman in her sleep, in such manner as we men dream of our selves in the shape of our bodies; or else that himself being otherwise busied, or sleeping, yea perhaps dreaming too, this vision happened to the woman by an Angel or by some other means, and that he *by the spirit of prophecy* knowing before-hand when such a vision

should

should be vouchsafed unto her, was pleased by a kind of promise thereof, to gratifie the desires of that good woman. For if himself in person were present at the time of that vision, certainly it was by speciall, nay by wonderfull grace and priviledge, that he so was, not by nature, or any proper faculty of his own. And whither the woman saw him personally and really present or no, yet surely something of like nature it was, to that we reade of in the *Acts of the Apostles* concerning *Saul*, of whom our Lord Jesus speaking to *Ananias* tells him, that *Saul had seen Ananias coming to him, &c.* when as *Ananias* himself as yet knew not *Saul*, nor any thing of the businesse. Yea

Act. 9. 11.

and

and which way soever of these that man of God should have answered me, I would yet have proceeded further with him concerning the Martyrs, and asked him, in what manner it is that they are present, either in mens sleep or otherwise, to such persons as have the favour to see them sometimes, *viz.* when and how they please, and chiefly how they are present, when devils in mens bodies do cry out, confessing that they are tormented by them, and do beseech the Martyrs to spare them; or whether such things be done indeed and immediately by Angelicall powers onely, yet in the honour and commendation of Martyrs, as God is pleased to command, for the good of us men, the Martyrs

Why God Almighty dispenseth his favours at the memory and intercession of Martyrs.

themſelves in the mean time remaining in perfect reſt, attending wholly unto an other and much better viſion, wherein though ſeparated from us, yet their charities ceaſe not to pray for us.

Devils tormented by the relicks of Martyrs.

For of a truth at the Martyrs S. *Gervaſius* and *Protaſius* in Millain, the devils did expreſly and by name confeſſe (beſides ſundry perſons that were deceaſed) Saint *Ambroſe* Biſhop of the place, who was then alive, and entreated that he would ſpare them, yet was he at that time buſied elſewhere about other matters and knew nothing of that which paſſed. Now ſuppoſing theſe things to be done, ſometimes as I have ſaid, by the Martyrs themſelves preſent, and ſometimes

Saints living abſent torment devils in poſſeſſed bodies.

times by the presence of Angels, by what signs they may be discerned or distinguished the one from the other, none I suppose, can certainly know or determine, but he onely who hath *the proper gift* thereof, which *gift* is distributed unto every one who hath it, by the Spirit of God, according as himself pleaseth. That holy man *John*, 'tis very like would have satisfied me in all these points; at least thus far, that either by his teaching me I should have learnt, and perceived the things I heard to be true, or else not being able to perceive them my self, I should yet believe them upon his credit, who did both know them, and affirm them to be so. Nay, if perchance he should answer

A wonderfull humility in S. Aug. mixed with great Christian piety.

me out of holy Scripture, and say *Enquire not of things too high for thee, search not after things that be too hard, but what our Lord hath commanded thee, think on that alwayes*, yet even this also I should take in good part. For surely, there being many things so obscure and intricate, that we can hardly expect to attain them perfectly in this life, it should be no small advantage, but to know clearly and certainly that they are not to be enquired further after: as when a man studies hard to learn a thing, which he supposeth perhaps will be much for his profit, yet I think it doth him no harm, when an other man rightly informs him, how to do as well without it.

Eccles. 3

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

TO conclude therefore, things ſtanding thus as hath been ſaid, we are not to imagine that any thing we do for the dead doth profit them, ſave that onely which we beg for them of Almighty God, by the ſacrifices which we make to him on their behalf, that is to ſay, *by the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar, by Almes, or by our own prayers:* yea even theſe advantage not all for whom they are made, but ſuch onely, whoſe former life hath deſerved that ſuch good offices ſhould profit them after death. But becauſe we our ſelves diſcern not certainly among the dead,

Maſſe, Almes, and Prayer profitable for the dead accord. to S. Auſtin.

Prayers and Maſſes for the dead profit onely ſuch who died in Gods Grace.

who are ſuch, and who are not ſuch, it is thought more expedient to do theſe things in generall *for all the faithfull departed*, to the intent that none be omitted to whom ſuch favours may of right belong. For it is much better, if it ſo fall out, that ſome thing ſuperfluous be done in regard of thoſe who receive neither good nor harm by them, then that any thing neceſſary ſhould be wanting to thoſe who have need. Howbeit every man performeth theſe things with more diligence and devotion for his particular friends then otherwiſe; as expecting the ſame meaſure of Charity afterwards from his own. But as to this matter of Funerall

A pious and prudent diſcourſe.

and

and all that ſolemnity which we uſe about interring the body, whatſoever is ſpent or done that way it is no ſuccour or ſalvation to the ſoul, but an office of pure humanity agreeable unto and iſſuing from that affection, whereby all men naturally love *their own fleſh*, yea and think it reaſonable, that in ſome caſes a man ſhould have care of his neighbours body, as well as of his own, and in this caſe eſpecially, when the ſpirit is gone to whom it did belong, when time was, to uphold and govern it. And truely if they who believe not the reſurrection of the fleſh, do yet perform ſuch things to their dead, how much more ought we to do ſo who believe not onely that

The final reſolution of the queſtion, that it is good carefully to bury the dead, and alſo to bury them in places conſecrate to Martyrs, and when their reliques are the reaſon of it.

that the dead body ſhall riſe again and live for ever, but that the performance of ſuch good offices towards them is it ſelf in ſome ſort a teſtimony of that Faith. But that we bury them at the *Memories* of the Martyrs, as I have ſaid before, in this reſpect onely it ſeems to me to advantage the dead, namely that thereby the affection of his friends *praying for him, and commending him to the Patronage of theſe martyrs,* may be increaſed.

Thus have you my anſwer, framed as well as I could, unto ſuch points as you thought expedient to enquire of me: if it ſeems overlong, I deſire you would pardon me, and impute it to the delight and af-

affection I have to hold discourse with you. As for the book it self, I intreat your venerable Charity would let me know by your letters ere long what you think of it. I believe, it will be much more welcome for the bearer's sake, *viz.* our Brother and fellow-Priest *Candidianus*, whom for the report your letters gave of him, I received with all affection, and dismissed again as much against my will: For verily he much comforted us with his presence in Christs Charity; and to speak but the truth, I complied with your desires much upon his instance. For indeed your letters found me so distracted with other cares, that you may attribute not a

little

little to his daily ſolliciting and minding me thereof, if you receive any competent anſwer to your queſtion.

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Deo Gratias.
